

THE MASTERY OF SEX  
THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY  
AND RELIGION

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*By the Same Author*

PSYCHOLOGY IN SERVICE OF THE SOUL  
THE TRANSFORMING FRIENDSHIP  
JESUS AND OURSELVES  
AFTER DEATH  
THE AFTERWORLD OF THE POETS  
HIS LIFE AND OURS  
HOW CAN I FIND GOD?  
DISCIPLESHIP  
PSYCHOLOGY AND LIFE  
WHY DO MEN SUFFER?  
IT HAPPENED IN PALESTINE  
A SHEPHERD REMEMBERS  
THE ETERNAL VOICE  
THINKING ALOUD IN WAR-TIME  
THIS IS THE VICTORY  
PERSONALITIES OF THE PASSION



LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD

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# The Mastery of Sex

THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY  
AND RELIGION

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*"The spiritual quintessence of the sexual revolution is the complete unabashed severance of sex from sin."*—SCHMALHAUSEN in Sex and Civilization.

*"The old notion of the sinfulness of the sex process in se, is superstitious, not religious; and must be discarded before ethical religion can assert its full sway over humanity's sex life."*—NORTHCOTE in Christianity and Sex Problems.

WHEN I was a minister in Manchester a group of men came to me on one occasion and the gist of what they said was this: "Has the Church nothing to say about sex? To master it is the problem of every one of us at some time or another. For most of us it is a lifelong battle needing constant vigilance and marked by constant failure. Novels, cinema films, plays of a certain kind, not to speak of the 'smutty yarns' that go round the places where we work, fling sex at us. Yet the Church, which has for its aim helping people to face life with some chance of personal victory, is all but silent about it. Here is without doubt our greatest temptation; in this sphere are our greatest moral problems whether we are married or not. Yet you give us no help." To me this was a challenge which I tried to take up at once.

The extension of my psychological work makes it evident to me that women and girls are faced by similar problems to those which confront men. It is, I believe, an underestimate to say that eighty out of a hundred people who seek my help are in some sort of tangle or difficulty, or are facing some problem in life, which derives from sex, interpreting that word in the widest way. Sometimes such a problem only needs spiritual direction of a definite practical sort. Sometimes it needs psychological technique and skill. Sometimes the difficulty is definitely one for a medical psycho-therapist. Sometimes the patient must be sent on to some discriminating, understanding man or woman doctor for purely physical advice or treatment.

The fact is, as I hope to show, that modern men and women have on their hands, as it were, vast quantities of sex-energy which will never be needed for its primary biological purpose. How to handle that overplus becomes

an acute problem. Mishandling that overplus leads to neurosis or nervous breakdown, to frayed nerves and tempers, to morbid curiosities and habits, and often to acts which lead to depressing and disintegrating self-loathing, an enslavement from which no permanent escape seems possible, and often to moral degradation and *débâcle*.

It would be worth doing anything to rescue sex from what it is to most of my generation, a murky and furtive secret. I am afraid it cannot be completely done. The Victorian curse and taboos are too hard to overcome. And of course much that we want to sweep away goes back to earlier days; much, indeed, to the days of early Christianity. The end of the world was at hand. A new order was about to begin. The flesh belonged to this world. It was evil. Sex and sin were synonymous. So Christianity grew up with an attitude to sex from which many are not, even now, emancipated. But I believe emancipation could be achieved for the rising generation. If only sex could be presented to them so that their reaction to it was as clean and joyous and radiant as their reaction to the splendour of a summer dawn! If only the facts about sex could be received by the mind as other facts are received! I believe it can be done if we will put away foolish words, foolish silences, foolish embarrassment, foolish glances; if our religion is without mawkish sentimentality; if our facing of facts is neither prurient nor blatant. Religion and psychology, faith and science need to be yoked together and intelligently applied in order that sex, to many people still an unclean thing, may become what surely the God who implanted it meant it to be.

Some will say, "Why drag in religion?" In my view it is not dragged in. If psychology be defined as the science of behaviour, religion is without doubt the most potent moulder of behaviour in the world. Again and again in my experience, though it has been of value to disentangle the muddle of sex-disharmony, real conquest has only come about by that new affection, new loyalty, and above all, new dynamic and orientation which religion supplies. Talk out a problem as you will, what can avail to fill up those tracks of fatal habit which the repetition of acts and morbid thoughts have

ploughed into the mind? The analysis and investigation of a mind are useful methods of effecting a cure in some cases of mental disharmony. A supplementary religious synthesis is, in my experience, a form of spiritual treatment which is of enormous complementary value. Indeed the right kind of religious adjustment is, in some cases, the only hope of a *permanent* cure. "Speaking as a student of psycho-therapy," says Dr. J. A. Hadfield, "I am convinced that the Christian religion is one of the most valuable and potent influences that we possess for producing that harmony and peace of mind and that confidence of soul which is needed to bring health and power to a large proportion of nervous patients. In some cases I have attempted to cure nervous patients with suggestions of quietness and confidence, but without success until I have linked these suggestions on to that faith in the power of God which is the substance of the Christian's confidence and hope. Then the patient has become strong."<sup>1</sup> People need the cleansing stream of a new or renewed spiritual life.

Some will ask, "Why drag in psychology?" My answer is that many books written on sex by religious enthusiasts are sentimental in the wrong sense and they are often neither practical nor definite. They would attempt to meet a case, say, of masturbation with the advice, "Read your Bible and say your prayers." And as long as the prayers are positive acceptances of the grace, forgiveness and power of God, and not morbid contemplations of past falls, which suggest to the mind failure rather than success, there is, of course, help to be found there. But this advice to *people unenlightened in other ways* is certainly not the fullest help that can be given them. Advice is not less religious because it is scientific. It is not less religious, but more so, to pour water on an outbreak of fire than to pray God it may do no harm. On the other hand I am aware that the *purely* scientific treatise does not go far enough. It is candid, matter of fact, accurate, but, with some exceptions, such a book gives no real help to people grappling with a terrific problem. It eases their feelings to understand themselves

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit*, edited by Canon Streeter (Macmillan), p. 113. •

better, but it does not leave their soul on its knees thanking God for a mighty deliverance.

The problem is pressing in the extreme. Cases of psychological disorder quoted in textbooks reveal sex at the bottom of countless disharmonies. Doctors, or rather, *some* doctors, know to what extent sex problems worry their patients and lie behind the unhappiness both physical and mental of married people. Yet few doctors have more than the barest acquaintance with the science of psychology and fewer still feel free to talk to a patient about religious readjustment, and in this matter most psycho-therapists feel the same. Ministers in the confidence of their people are again and again moved to the depths at the extent of sex-disharmony. Here again, though most can apply religious palliatives, few are psychologists, and many are themselves timid about discussing the real root of so much misery. Nor is this to be wondered at since the same attitude is common among conventional religious people. Even parents whose lives have been disabled by early sex ignorance show blank cowardice again and again if pressed to enlighten their own children. So misery abounds and help is not forthcoming. The conspiracy of silence and embarrassment is maintained. Where sex is discussed freely and without reserve it is frequently only thus discussed in an atmosphere which makes it worse than a secret, namely a nasty phase of perverted animalism. It is hardly discussed at all in the only atmosphere in which a solution is likely to be found, namely the atmosphere, neither prudish or prurient, of an enlightened, sunny and healthy Christianity which eagerly accepts the help of any science, including the new psychology, and which regards nothing God has made—and He made the sex instinct—as common or unclean.

This book has a presumptuous aim. It aims at dealing with every sex problem a man or woman is likely to meet. It seeks to combine accurate science with applied religion. It offers what I called in a former book by the clumsy title, psycho-religious healing. It seeks to bring religion to the aid of men and women in trouble through sex disharmony and mismanagement, and to reinforce this help by a clear



psychological appreciation of the situation, illustrated by actual cases of both men and women who, by the methods suggested, have found their way out of their particular trouble or problem. It also does not shirk giving such physical facts and directions as are necessary to sex-mastery. Recognizing that the subject often inevitably overlaps into the physical, I am particularly grateful for the help of various medical friends with whom I have often co-operated in case-work. But especially I am grateful to my friend, Dr. Marion Greaves, who has not only read the whole of the manuscript and given me many helpful suggestions, but has herself been responsible for writing, at my request, notes which I have used in dealing with the more physical aspects of sex problems.

I must also express my deep thanks to many others. Dr. J. R. Rees, of Wimpole Street, the well-known psycho-therapist, and the Rev. Dr. Herbert Gray, author of *Men, Women and God*, have both honoured me by consenting to write forewords from their respective points of view. Principal the Rev. Dr. W. F. Lofthouse, who was Chairman of the Copec Commission on "The Relation of the Sexes," has been good enough to read the proofs, make suggestions, and write a brief epilogue.<sup>1</sup> My friends Dr. Raynor Johnson, M.A., D.Sc., Ph.D., of whose work in psychology more will be heard, and the Rev. Harold Roberts, M.A., Ph.D., have given special help for which I am very grateful. Various medical friends have given me unstinted help from their reading, experience and sense of what needs to be said on sex matters. Lastly, my secretary, Miss E. M. Bailey, has, with characteristic thoroughness and painstaking attention to detail, typed the various copies of the manuscript, compiled the Index, and helped me correct the proofs.

Welcoming medical help, however, does not obscure the fact that sex is an instinct. Its manifestations are psychological manifestations. I should go further and say that sex is a spiritual thing. It is hardly—unless circumstances bring disease—in the province of medicine or surgery as such. At the same time, in view of the fact that sex is expressed

<sup>1</sup> The Forewords and Epilogue are omitted in this edition: \*



biologically partly through physical organs, and that conception control and some other matters demand the doctor's knowledge of anatomy and practical skill, no book discussing these relevant questions could aim at completeness without the aid of the doctor being called in.

Where the subject seems to point to a discussion of great importance to some, but too big to be included in these pages, or outside the sphere of the writer, the reader is directed to read other books. Many bibliographies published at the end of books or chapters of books fail in their object. They are either so long that the bewildered reader does not know which to buy and so buys none, or else prices and publishers are not mentioned and through inertia the reader never follows the matter up. The books mentioned herein are small, easily purchased, and accurate. They are not carelessly suggested. They have all been read and recommended by more than one who has read these pages and they are really worth the reader's attention on the points with which they deal. A warning will not, I think, be misunderstood by readers against reading more than is necessary for the elucidation of their own problems actual or potential, or the solving of the problems of those whom they may be trying to help.

While the book represents convictions reached by the author after much thought, he is fully conscious of the complicated nature of the problems discussed, and of the fact that other people, approaching them equally from the Christian point of view, will disagree with many of his conclusions. Neither the publishers nor the other contributors to the volume must be taken as endorsing everything that it contains.

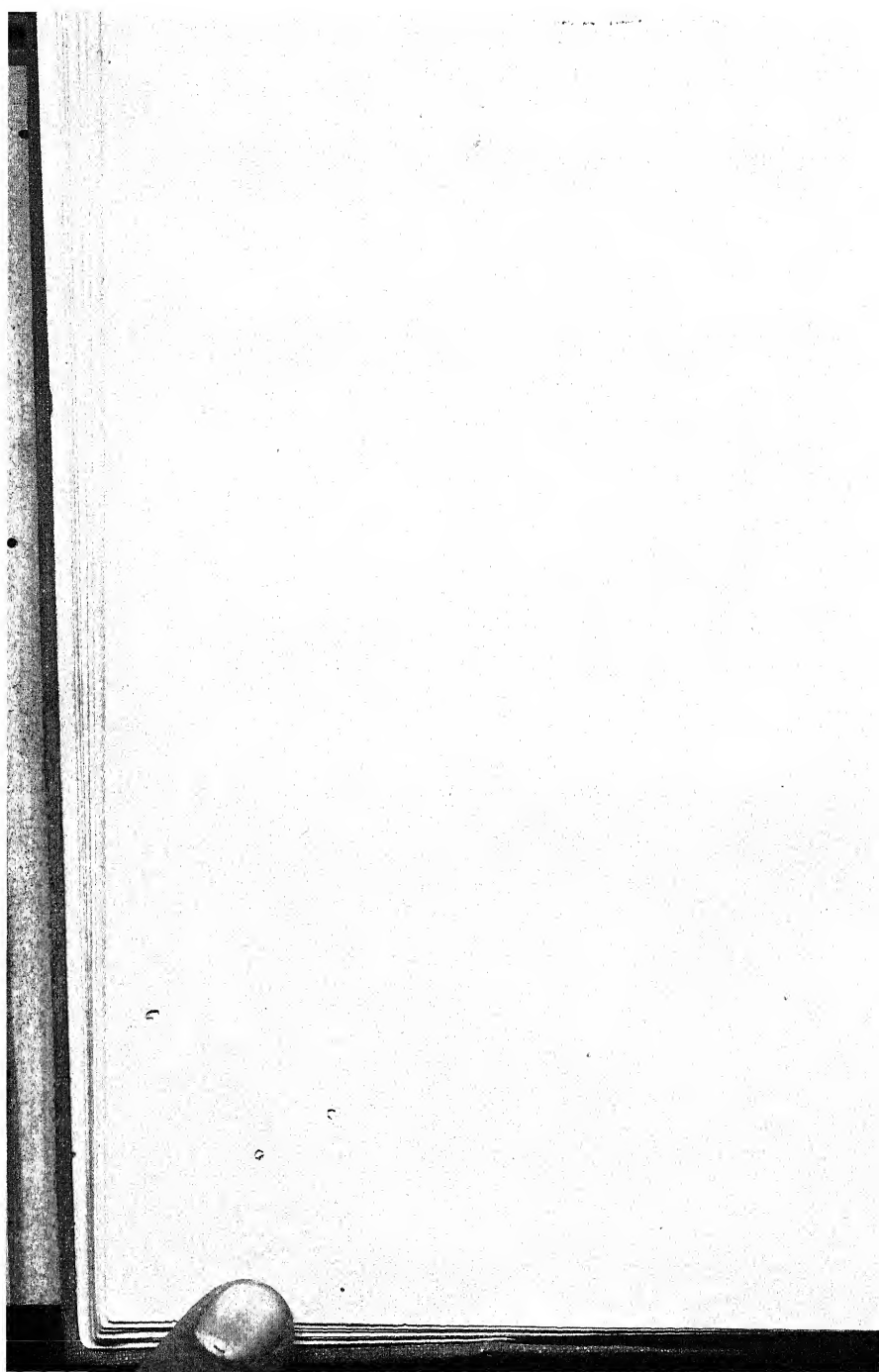
The author owes much to the standard books on the subject. It would not serve a useful purpose to mention them all. Where a useful purpose would be served they are mentioned in footnotes.

Cases are cited because they are quite the best illustrations of the arguments used. They also show what a tremendous need there is for guidance in sex-life especially among Christian people, who, often for that very reason,

though, as I think, wrongly, have avoided the subject in seeking pastoral, psychological or medical advice. A friend of mine who is a well-known psycho-therapist in the Harley Street area tells me that by far the majority of people whose cases show sex-repression are religious people. It will be understood that where cases are cited, everything but the relevant facts has been so disguised as to avoid identification. Much of the substance of the book has been delivered as lectures or sermons and the method of direct address is in many places retained.

So these pages are broadcast for all who need them, and it is hoped that those who are in the grip of a terrifying darkness in regard to sex may have enough light by which to see a path, and that those in whose natures instincts and impulses are at war in a conflict which worries, distresses and exhausts them, may find their weary feet being guided into the way of peace.

LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD.



## THE MISTAKE OF SILENCE AND IGNORANCE

*"The instinct of sex is not a grimy secret between two rather shamed human beings, but a great impulse of life and love."*—  
MAUDE ROYDEN, in *Sex and Common Sense*.

*"I would rather have all the risks which come from free discussion of sex than the great risks we run by a conspiracy of silence. . . . All thoughtful Christians and citizens ought to take their part in discussing the great problems with which it deals. . . . We want to liberate the sex impulse from the impression that it is always to be surrounded by negative warnings and restraints, and to place it in its rightful place among the great creative and formative things."*—ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, in a *Speech at the Mansion House in the interests of the Rescue Work of the London Diocese, April 4th, 1930*.

It is exceedingly unfortunate that to so many excellent people the subject of sex seems almost unclean. This is due, I suppose, to the age-long taboo placed upon it and to the fact that in a civilization such as ours the sex instinct has been more repressed than any other instinct of the personality. It would be a very great service indeed if, by fearlessly facing the subject of sex, we could rid it of the fear, suspicion and uncleanness with which it is surrounded in the minds of so many people. In point of fact, there is nothing inherently more unclean in the facts of sex than in the facts of botany.

It is an important part of the business of the Church to help people to fight their temptations and face up to life, seeing in every phase of life the meanings of God. It is sex which is responsible for at least eighty per cent of the moral temptations of youth. Novels, plays, and books of a certain kind reek with sex, or rather with its misrepresentations and its appeal to the physical side of our nature, and yet the Church, by a mistaken reticence, is silent. It cannot be right that we should merely expound theological notions and biblical ideas without definitely relating them to those personal moral issues in the facing of which people so badly need practical help. The problem of how to live clean lives and fight temptations that sweep through the personality

and have their origin in the sex instinct, probably faces every man and woman at some time or another. When Mr. H. G. Wells in his book, *God the Invisible King*, denied the Trinity, all the Churches raised their voices against him, but who has ever morally gone wrong, either through believing or disbelieving in the Trinity? Yet immorality walks the streets of all the cities of England, naked and unashamed. Sexual vice lowers the moral and physical status of the nation. Church members and worshippers, in far greater numbers than is generally supposed, are fighting strenuous secret battles with sexual desires, lying awake at night over sex-fears often based on ignorance, and in some cases yielding to sex-temptations which cause them acute unhappiness for many years and often drive them from the Church, yet the latter, with rare exceptions, has nothing to say, or what is said is often psychologically unsound however sincere. One can almost hear in imagination the blazing anger of Jesus, who denounced the Pharisees for being concerned with ritual and law and with neglecting what to Him was most important of all, the relation of the soul with God. So in these days He would be impatient, one imagines, with a Church which spent much time and strength on organization, creeds and ritual, but was all but silent in regard to the greatest private temptation of our times and slow to fight one of our greatest social evils.

To those who turn away from sex problems, I want to say three things. Remember that if you are contributing to the conspiracy of silence you are really working, however unintentionally, on the side of evil. Millions have slipped into sin through never understanding the facts of sex, and to preserve silence about them is to make an atmosphere of furtive darkness in which evil and fear more easily flourish. Secondly, if the management of your sex life is your particular problem and you turn away from it, you have not solved the problem; you have rather taken an attitude of mind in which it becomes insoluble. Your highest welfare in this particular part of life's struggle lies in your accepting your physical nature with its sex elements, not in avoiding it and trying to pretend that you have no sex feelings or that

they are something of which to be ashamed. It is wrong to have certain sex experiences which undermine the well-being of society or destroy our own self-respect, and it is wrong to steal bread, but there is nothing more sinful in having sex feelings than in having feelings of hunger. Both are derived from instincts which God has implanted in the personality, and all normal men and women have sex desires. In men they are more violent, like gusts of wind which subside and for a time leave them in peace. But when such winds are blowing, it may be said with sympathy that many men need every bit of self-control they can muster. The slightest sex stimulus, even a pretty face, or beautiful hair, or a scene in a novel or play may be enough to rouse sexual desire to an almost intolerable pitch. In women such desire is more often a strain, as Miss Royden says, like the continual pressure of a dome on pillars. Yet, in many women, the hunger for a child often becomes a passion that all but tears them to pieces.<sup>1</sup>

Thirdly, having recognized sex as normal in personality, the important thing is the way in which we deal with our sex feelings. To try to pretend that we have not got them is folly, for the pretence is vain. In some way or other the energies set free by the sex instinct will make their presence known, and if they are not wisely directed they may cause spiritual,

<sup>1</sup> See Marie Stopes, D.Sc., *Married Love*, chap. iv. See also Havelock Ellis, *Psychology of Sex*, vol. vii, pp. 213-36.

In women, different in this matter from men, sex desire appears to have a definite periodicity with two high peaks of desire, one before, and an even higher one just after menstruation. A period of sexual excitement in women often begins about five days before menstruation and lasts three or four days. This marks the first peak of desire. The two days immediately before menstruation are often days of low spirits and depression. Following menstruation, which normally lasts four or five days, is a period of a day or two of low vitality and a depression caused by a vestigial memory in the unconscious mind of failure to have a child. This culminates, with many women, in a period of greatest sexual excitement and desire, followed by no remarkable access of sex-feeling until the approach of the next menstruation. The likelihood of fertilization only roughly follows the graph of desire. It is said to reach the highest point six days after menstruation begins, remaining at that height till the twelfth day and then declining to a point of sterility on the twenty-second day; but this is not an infallible rule. The period of comparative sterility, or so-called "safe period," does not coincide with a period of desire.

mental, or even physical disruption of the personality. Further, someone may turn to you some day for your help on some sex problem of their own, and if they do, do not turn away, for that is to pass by on the other side. Let us remember that the Samaritan picked up the wounded traveller, though his wounds stank in the sun and his blood stained the rescuer's hands and raiment. Many young people have no greater need than the help of some understanding, sympathetic person who has trodden their road before them and who, without being prudish, shocked or blatant, can show them the way to a clean, virile life.

Let us now face up to the first fact about sex. In ancient days a large amount of sex energy was needed to produce a lot of descendants, since the number of descendants was the only kind of wealth. When I was privileged to be the guest of various Arab sheiks while on staff-duty as an officer in Mesopotamia during the war, this fact was very evident. Many Arab tribes, like most nomads, are at continual war with one another. It is obviously of little use one tribe having an excess of wealth in gold, or herds of camels and goats, if a neighbouring hostile tribe has a few hundred more male fighting members. The first time there is a battle, if numbers mean victory, as they so often do, the wealth changes hands. The real wealth is to have as many descendants as possible. We remember the promise to Abraham, "Thy seed shall be as the sand of the seashore for multitude." The polygamy which prevailed made the "raising of seed" no burden on the women-folk, and the handling of their sex-life no problem to the men. Thus though the problem is more complicated than such a brief statement would suggest, we see that in the early chapters of man's history a tremendous amount of sex energy was required and produced. Harmony was easy to men and women because it was used in the biological way. In modern days, with different moral standards, the care for the weak and ailing, the cessation of violent methods of capture and the prevalence of small families, man, still a powerfully-sexed animal, has, as it were, a tremendous amount of sex energy left over in his hands and the problem of so many peoples lies in



knowing just what to do with it.

The existence of this sex energy in all of us is, of course, that which makes what is called "sex appeal" so strong. If we face facts we know that certain magazines, certain novels, certain films, certain revues, certain plays are only successful because they make that appeal. They are a deliberate appeal to the tiger within. They bring that tiger rushing up with a roar against the bars of his cage, the bars of self-control, convention, law, or fear of consequences, and one day the bars may be loose or the tiger too strong, and sometimes irreparable evil is done. Life would be difficult enough if, having this store of sex-energy on our hands, it were rarely appealed to. The opposite is the case. It is awakened, stimulated and roused almost at every turn. Every young Christian ought to recognize these stimuli for what they are, and not pretend that they are necessarily "art" or "literature" or "realism." Just because we are made with this instinct of sex so strong, factors which appeal to it should be recognized as such by every young man and woman. If we had the right adjustment to sex these things would not trouble us. The problem is that few have been able to reach perfect self-adjustment in this matter. It is part of the purpose of this book to help towards such adjustment.

Let me in the early pages of this book make an appeal to parents and teachers. I think—and I am basing what I write on some years of experience in private interviewing—that it is hardly less than criminal to send a boy or girl out into the modern world without their knowing the facts of sex. I can speak of one young boy who was in an agony of mind amounting to torture for six years at a boarding-school because he thought that a nocturnal emission of semen was a symptom of venereal disease. One sentence would have saved him six years of worry. I could speak of a girl in her late teens, known to me, who believed that because a man—an uncle as it happened—put his arm round her waist, under her coat, she was going to have a baby. Night after night she was sleepless with terror and anxiety, better imagined than described. Another in middle twenties asked whether she



should throw up her position as a teacher in a school because since a man had touched her in an intimate way, though only with his fingers, she thought she might in consequence become a mother. Another thought birth took place through the navel and was greatly worried that it did not develop in size. Another made an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. When asked why, she said she had contracted "a beastly disease." Medical examination showed that the "beastly disease" was merely the first period, which coming to a girl utterly unprepared and ignorant drove her to the false but terrifying conclusion which led her to make an attempt on her life. Another, sent to me by a doctor for psychological treatment, actually married a man for whom she had no regard or love, thinking that because he had touched her breast she was likely to have a child. A terrible awakening and life-long incompatibility and unhappiness have resulted from the mistaken silence maintained by the girl's mother.

As I write this chapter a case comes to me from a distance. The patient is an engaged woman of thirty-two. Four times the marriage has been arranged and broken off at the last minute. The patient has feelings of terror at the approach of the actual ceremony. In analysis it emerges that at sixteen, her parents having brought her up in entire sex-ignorance, went away from home. One afternoon a boy of seventeen called for a book the patient had promised him. She asked him into the house. They talked together, and he went away. Nothing else happened. On the parents' return they learnt of this and the mother rated the girl soundly for asking the boy in, in a brutal manner told her the crude facts of sex and concluded by terrifying her with the statement that she "might have had a baby." The mother also questioned the girl in such a manner as to whether "anything had happened," that the terrified girl began to wonder if anything *had* happened. Her fears postponed her next menstrual period, and this the mother took as certain evidence that her wicked daughter had lied to her and that she was pregnant. Incredible as it may seem, the mother then had the father thrash the girl for deceit. All too late

medical advice proved that no intercourse had taken place and medical treatment brought back normal health to the bodily functions. But the girl's mind is so wounded and her attitude to sex so damaged that it will take a long psychological treatment to put her right. "All my life," the patient said to me, "I've been afraid of having babies without wanting to. I'm terrified of being married." It is not hard to guess at part of the origin of the fear. I can sincerely say that no week passes but I interview people whose lives have in some way been disabled by the wrong attitude to sex consequent on early sex ignorance. One sentence from a parent or teacher or minister or doctor to whom any of the people just mentioned had felt free to go would have saved them hours, and in some cases years, of agony.

The extent of ignorance of sex, even in those otherwise educated, is all but incredible. A woman graduate in honours of a famous university consulted me. She comes from a splendid Christian home, but had been brought up in complete ignorance of most of the facts of sex. She informed me that she had slept at most of the hotels in a city which I will call X with one of her tutors. "I thought it strange of him," she said, "but I never thought it was *wrong*. I loved him and wanted to make him happy. One day he kissed me violently, and it was this, not sexual intercourse, which I always thought brought babies. After this I did have a sleepless night. Early in the morning I heard a squeak in the bed and thought the baby had come. When I found that the squeak was caused by the hot water bottle my relief was enormous."

Many will frankly disbelieve her story. I can only give my word that it happened when she was in her early twenties, that she is a personal friend of my wife and myself, and that she read these words in typescript and approved them as the simple truth. Moreover it must be clearly understood that these cases are almost insignificant compared with more serious neuroses brought on in the first place by ignorance. Indeed it is unusual to find anyone of my own generation who learned the facts of sex as they

ought to be learned, and the results of this tyranny of ignorance vary from the kind of anxiety illustrated above to neurosis bordering on, or actually reaching insanity, as in the case of a girl who after a sex-adventure which did not result in actual intercourse, was convinced that she had contracted syphilis, a venereal disease. She confided her fears to no one. For fifteen years she kept it to herself, treating herself with every kind of drug and injection. At long last, nearly mad, she confessed her "sin" to a minister, who at once sent for a doctor and had her examined. There was no trace of syphilis to be found by the most exacting tests known to science. But the matter had gone too far. The patient insisted that she *had* got syphilis and that the doctor was deceiving her in order to be kind. No less than five specialists all said there was no trace of syphilis. But they were all disbelieved and the patient at last had to be sent to a mental hospital. To this length the fear born of ignorance can drive us.

Yet ignorance perhaps is not the worst thing. What perhaps is more dangerous than ignorance is knowledge picked up in an unclean way. Parents, at whatever cost, must get in first. Unless children are guarded in a careful way they will often come to a knowledge of the facts somehow, and if they do not gather them in a clean way they will get them, or a travesty of them, in an unclean way, and in getting them may learn unclean habits which it may take them half a lifetime to overcome. Very few people, outside the professions of psychologist, minister and doctor, realize that lonely secret battle which thousands are fighting to gain a mastery over an unhealthy past, a battle which would never have had to be fought if the parents had done their duty or if there had been some adequate friend or book to turn to in the opening days of adolescence. Once put a taboo on any subject, once get into people's heads that it is not quite respectable to speak about it, once surround it with blushes or the hurried change of subject and you produce an unhealthy curiosity which for thousands of children has meant the taking of the wrong turning, a mistake due to nothing else but the "hush, hush" embarrassment of certain

parents when their children ask perfectly natural questions about babies or kittens. They get an impression that there is something shameful about sex, and that impression sinks into the unconscious part of their minds to bear fruit in future days<sup>1</sup> or remains in consciousness as one of the three following lies:

1. That there is something about birth concerning which it is wrong to desire knowledge.
2. That there is a relation between men and women that is a furtive and grimy secret.
3. That there are parts of our bodies that are disgusting or shameful.

I would therefore urge parents and teachers who have charge of young folk, or who have their confidence, to tell them the facts and to get in first before the subject is ruined by the unclean jest, the dirty story or the suggestive newspaper. This is not always easy, but if it is done by the method of *answering the questions as they arise* it should not be difficult, and is one of the obligations involved in carrying out the vow at baptism which parents make to God when they pray that their child may be "sheltered from the dangers and temptations of the world, kept safe from ungodly teaching and example, and brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The results of ignorance about sex are truly appalling, and again and again one sees cases in which the refusal of parents to break this conspiracy of silence brings about disaster, especially among girls and women. My telephone bell rings. The father of a girl in a distant town wonders whether by psychological treatment I can help his daughter. Inquiries elicit simply that she is moody, irritable, sleepless and without appetite. She goes to a neighbouring city to attend university classes, but wanders round the city and does not go to class at all. Being pressed, I ask for time. Can she come later, in a month perhaps? Yes, the father thinks there is no hurry. Then late one night another telephone call. The case has become urgent. May he bring her

<sup>1</sup> Women brought up in entire ignorance of sex frequently are revolted by physical intercourse even after marriage.

to-morrow? Her anger has blazed out. She is violent one moment and in tears the next. For an hour we talk. The cause—which the father imagined to be secret drugging—is unmasked. At thirteen she had an illness and during it practised masturbation. She quickly conquered the habit but decided that she had rendered herself unfit for marriage. She then, with all the sincerity of thirteen, made a vow that she, being unclean for ever, would never marry. Sex feeling and legitimate desire, bottled up and thought wrong, had wrought havoc on mind, nerves and body. A doctor's tonics had proved useless. Half an hour's conversation directed toward convincing the patient that no real harm had been done and that the vow must be discarded brought about a cure in less than a day, though the father had thought the beginnings of insanity were in sight.

It is almost impossible to avoid some kind of trouble if the tyranny of silence be maintained. I think of a girl in a famous high school whom the headmistress had decided to expel for lying and stealing. As a last resource I was asked to examine her psychologically. To make a long story short, conversations with the child, then thirteen years of age, and with her parents who were good Christian people, revealed the fact that she was entirely ignorant of all sex facts and had even been allowed to approach puberty in ignorance. Her first menstrual period she had completely and successfully concealed, though it had filled her with desperate fear that some terrible disease had befallen her. The second was inhibited through fear. The third was discovered by her mother, who even then maintained silence save to say that it was "not unusual." The child's mind was surging with that new sense of not-understood power and queer restlessness which puberty brings to the youth of both sexes. If it had been recognized as sex stirring and awakening; if she had understood herself and been understood by others and helped through this difficult phase all would have been well. But the new energies were driven underground, as it were, only to burst out in morbid, anti-social, and semi-perverted manifestations of power unrecognized by her as sexual in origin, the power obtainable by lying and theft. Three con-

versations, the willing co-operation of enlightened parents anxious all along to do their best but bound by the chains of taboo and convention, and the child was saved from early disgrace and from being thought of and treated as a young criminal. To-day there is not a brighter, more normal or healthier child to be found in the school. Another patient whose case I undertook at the request of a distinguished specialist asked her form-mistress a question about the origin of babies and was repulsed. She turned to the head-mistress and asked again and was repulsed. The form-mistress told her not to be stupid and the headmistress threatened to write to the girl's mother and complain that her daughter was "not nice." In desperation the girl asked her mother and was told "surely you know all about it by this time." But at twenty-three, when I began her analysis—which took six months—she did not know what my own children knew at six years of age. Girls seem to suffer from ignorance more than boys both at puberty—through the more obvious, and often hated, physical signs of the change in their case and a greater shyness in asking questions even from one another—and in later life, but thousands of boys have suffered mental agonies through ignorance and have been driven to morbid curiosities or the habit of self-abuse so easy to start, but sometimes exceedingly hard to cure, and bringing a maddening remorse and sense of loss of self-respect and shame.

Another danger of shrouding the subject of sex in silence until mature years have been reached is that then any sex experience is likely to be in the nature of a very serious shock. The sex nature with its attendant feelings is too rudely awakened. On the other hand a person educated properly in sex matters can not only generally escape assault, but if it does happen, its consequences are not nearly so alarming.<sup>1</sup> So we have seen cases, particularly among young girls, in which a too intimate approach on the part of some man has thrown the whole personality into tumult and apprehension and filled the mind with fears leading to sub-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. V. Hamilton and Kenneth Macgowan in *Sex and Civilization*, p. 575.



sequent fear of marriage and fear of the whole relations of men and women and sometimes leading to the refusal of a worthy and honourable attachment. Even sex knowledge imparted late may prove a serious shock to the system and lead to neurosis. As Freud says,<sup>1</sup> "A number of undisputable observations have shown that a first experience with the sexual problem, a rather sudden revelation of what up to that time had been veiled, for example by the sight of the sexual act or of male genitals, by a lecture, printed or pictorial representation, can cause an anxiety neurosis in a maturing girl which is combined with hysteria in an almost typical manner."

The conspiracy of silence is not only a grave disservice to the child and adolescent. It is even more serious if it be maintained until marriage. Yet we have come across cases of men who married entirely in ignorance of the fact that a woman once a month passes through a physical crisis which has its repercussions in her nervous system. One such ignorant husband imagined his wife had injured herself in some way. Another imagined his wife had contracted a disease. The embarrassment and hurt feelings engendered by such ignorance it is easy to imagine, however hard to express. On the other hand a mother not infrequently allows her daughter to marry in ignorance of what the act in which marriage is physically consummated really is. The consequence is she is frequently repelled, shocked, and horrified when union is desired. Ask Mr. and Mrs. Smith to let their son or daughter enter into some contract in regard to money and notice how careful they will be that the youngster understands and accepts all the terms of the contract *before the latter is signed!* Yet, amazing as the inconsistency is, they will allow son and daughter to contemplate marriage, the most serious and far-reaching contract into which they will ever enter, and not only let them be ignorant of the terms of the contract, but be shocked that before they are committed to it they should *desire* to know what is involved.

The value of knowledge may be realized in part through the following figures.<sup>2</sup> "In Dr. Hamilton's *Research in*

<sup>1</sup>Freud's *Theories of the Neuroses* (Hitschmann), p. 30 (Kegan Paul).

<sup>2</sup>Quoted from Dr. Sherwood Eddy's *Sex and Youth* (S.C.M.), p. 149.

*Marriage* it was found that children wholesomely and naturally instructed by their parents at a very early age had more satisfactory married lives than those who received information later, often from unwholesome sources. For instance, of women who received their first instruction before the age of six, 84 per cent were able successfully to have the healthy climax of intercourse called the orgasm, or by some, the transport. Of those who learned of sex between the ages of six and eleven, only 45.45 per cent, and those who learned of sex after the age of twelve, only 41.96 per cent had adequate orgasm capacity. In many cases their early first impressions often affected their whole life after marriage. Of women whose early sex curiosity was met by encouragement from their parents, 73.33 per cent had adequate orgasm in their married life, while of those who met with stiffness, embarrassment or falsehood, only 42.11 per cent were able to experience this healthful consummation."

Dr. Exner in *Problems and Principles of Sex Education* gives an analysis compiled from the answers of 948 college men to a questionnaire. From this we learn that 91.5 per cent of these men got their sex information from unwholesome sources. Only 4 per cent got it from their parents. Dr. Stanley Hall, the great psychologist, writes, "My entire youth from six to eighteen was made miserable from lack of knowledge that anyone who knew anything of the nature of puberty might have given. This long sense of defect, dread of operation, shame and worry has left an indelible mark."

Let me add this word to young people whose parents have not undertaken this responsibility and who find themselves very curious about sex matters. Don't be ashamed of your curiosity; it is natural and not evil. There is nothing that may not be known with a perfectly clean mind. Take your curiosity to some adequate friend until you have received a satisfying answer to all your questions.

The Incarnation of Jesus is conclusive evidence that there is nothing inherently unclean in possessing a human personality which contains the instinct of sex. He was not



ashamed to take our nature. Therefore there cannot be anything about it essentially shameful or evil, and those who have lain awake at night worrying about the thoughts of sex, and disgusted that such thoughts should come to them, may comfort themselves with the fact that it is not these thoughts, but our way of dealing with them which makes for evil or for good. Such thoughts probably surged on to the threshold of the mind even of Jesus. He was tempted in all points even as we are, yet He was able so to direct sex energies that He remained without sin, and by His grace we shall be able to deal successfully with that sex energy which, for various reasons, cannot flow along the channel of its biological purpose. If we can put an end to the unhealthy conspiracy of silence and that ignorance or half-knowledge which means so much cruelty and disablement, then, whatever we have suffered, our children may grow up with real chances of attaining a normal and harmonious sex life, with healthy minds in healthy bodies, minds to which nothing is unclean except sin, and bodies which are the temples of the living God.

## WHAT THEN SHOULD BE KNOWN?

THERE are four things which are better known by the time adolescence is entered; facts which would have saved many from neurotic troubles in later life. They are, first, that sex union, from which alone the birth of a child can result, is the introduction of the penis or male organ, which is automatically erected for the purpose, into the vagina of the female and the ejaculation of the male fluid or semen, previously contained in the testicles, through the male organ into that of the female. Following the sex act, the male fluid may fertilize an egg-cell or ovum of the female which has been projected into the uterus from the ovaries situated above it, and this fertilized cell gradually develops into the foetus or embryo-child which grows in the mother's womb until, after nine months, the developed baby is forced down the vagina and birth takes place. This process is more fully described in Appendix I, which is based on notes by Dr. Marion Greaves.

Secondly, a boy needs to know that the male fluid accumulates in the testicles from puberty onwards (puberty being the change from boyhood to manhood characterized physically by the deepening voice and the growth of hair in armpits and on the lower part of the abdomen) and more semen or fluid may be formed than the system can assimilate, especially if he undergoes any kind of sex excitement. If this is so, it will be expelled during the night in what is sometimes called a nocturnal emission. This is a natural happening which should not cause him the slightest fear, though occasions of sex excitement should be avoided, since too frequent emission is devitalizing to the body and depressing to the mind.

Thirdly, a girl needs to know that when she reaches puberty or the threshold of womanhood, in addition to the growth of hair as noted above in the case of the boy, the breasts will enlarge and there will be a monthly discharge of blood through the vagina. This discharge is simply the

renewal of the mucous membrane of the uterus or womb in readiness for pregnancy should sex-intercourse have taken place. These two changes which cause great distress to an uninstructed girl should be placidly regarded as Nature's normal way of preparing her for marriage and motherhood in the years which lie ahead.

Fourthly, by the time adolescence is reached, the dangers of venereal infection should be taught. Both boys and girls, without being frightened by word-pictures of syphilitic victims, should be warned against the private parts being brought into contact with public urinals or water-closet seats in public lavatories. At the same time it is exceedingly rare for venereal infection to be contracted in this way. The bacteria cannot live long outside the body, and before there could be infection the rare coincidence would have to take place of a person with an abrasion of the skin bringing that area of his body into contact with some surface immediately previously touched by the sore of a diseased person. The rarity of such a coincidence makes many doctors state that it is practically impossible to catch venereal disease by this method, but coincidences are not as rare as is commonly supposed, and without creating alarm it is wise to be awake to possibilities. Many people worry about venereal disease, thinking they have contracted it. They are directed to the paragraph on page 133.

"Kissing," said Dr. Havelock Ellis,<sup>1</sup> "is an extremely common source of syphilitic infection, and of all extra-genital regions the mouth is by far the most frequent seat of primary syphilitic sores. The ignorant and unthinking are apt to ridicule those who point out the serious risks of miscellaneous kissing. But it remains nevertheless true that people who are not intimate enough to know the state of each other's health are not intimate enough to kiss each other." It may be added that Dr. Ellis' contention is only true if there is a chancre on the lips or possibly in the throat of the sufferer from venereal disease. Both boys and girls should be warned, when puberty is established, of the possibility of disease in their future mates and in those to

<sup>1</sup> *The Psychology of Sex*, vol. vi, pp. 337-8.

whom they may entrust their children. In parenthesis it may be said that the Church should help here. I always question those who seek to be married as to whether there is, in themselves or their parents, any disease which could be passed on. And though I cannot stop diseased persons marrying in a Registry Office, I could not conscientiously pray for the blessing of God on a marriage contracted between two persons when either had syphilis or gonorrhea, or when there was a particularly bad family history of insanity or epilepsy. If an undertaking were given that contraceptives would be employed the matter could be adjusted, but even then not without the full knowledge of all those concerned.<sup>1</sup>

Those about to marry should, of course, know a great deal more than is outlined above. Their needs are catered for in Appendix II, entitled "Physical Factors in Married Happiness." We are now concerned with what should be known by the time adolescence is reached and we think that every adolescent at puberty should be in possession of the relevant facts mentioned above.

The question is how to get these facts known, for obviously to leave the matter until the approach of puberty and then announce them bluntly, might be a very serious psychological shock.

I feel quite certain that the ideal way of imparting sex knowledge is for the parents to answer without embarrassment and in a perfectly matter-of-fact way the questions of a child *when they are asked*. It is a mistake, as I think, to

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tattersall, who is in charge of the Tuberculosis Branch of the City of Leeds Public Health Dept., tells me that tuberculosis is not strictly hereditary. If a child is immediately taken away at birth from an infected mother, not only is the child free from disease, but there are some indications that from the mother's blood he may gain a measure of immunity. The main reason against the marriage of tubercle-infected people is not so much the risk of passing on the disease, this can be met, but the fact that pregnancy so drains vitality that a slumbering tuberculosis will "light up" and a slight attack may become acute. Further, mortality is so high in the case of young adults who have positive signs of tuberculosis when they come of age that they should hesitate before marrying. Lastly, how many mothers would be willing to part from their children at birth in order to avoid passing on the disease? (Dr. Tattersall has read and approved this note.)

make a set and impressive occasion for the imparting of sex information. It surrounds the subject in the child's mind with that sense of mystery and emotion which we want to avoid. Even the religious way in which some people talk to their children about God sending babies runs the risk of sex information having an emotional flavour when it is better—unless the parents talk to their children about everything else in a religious way—for the information to be entirely matter-of-fact. If they ask what “that thing in the sky” is and they are told it is an aeroplane they absorb the information without emotion. If they say “Where did Baby come from?” and are told “Baby grew in Mummy's body” they will absorb that information in exactly the same way. If, however, there is the dramatic occasion, much more difficult for the parent himself than the immediate answer; or if there is the importation of religious sentiment, or the embarrassed look, or the change of subject, then birth is immediately differentiated from other phenomena and surrounded with just that emotional atmosphere which prevents its being received by the child-mind as other information is received. It will further be perceived that for a parent to send a child to someone else to be told sex facts makes the information different and gives it an undue importance. If questions are answered as they are asked, and drawn if they are not asked, then sex facts will have no more emotional import than other facts and there will be little left over with which to make an “occasion.”

It is common for some parents to answer questions by making reference to the ways in which flowers and animals multiply. This is, of course, all right so long as the child's questions are really answered. But children are interested in their own bodies and the bodies of the opposite sex and as to where the baby came from, and sometimes the information about flowers and kittens leaves a child's mind unsatisfied since he cannot see the application. As one youth complained to me, “they told me about puppies and kittens and still left me in ignorance as to how babies were born.” Parents need to realize that language that seems brutally plain even to the point of indecency to them, is not

so to a child of five who has no sense of what indecency is, let alone our conventional and often stupid idea of what is indecent. To a child all things are equally interesting. Nothing is common or unclean, and a child, unless and until we mislead him, is not enchained by adult notions of convention and propriety.

I feel quite sure that it is unwise to send a child to any books whatsoever. For one thing I have never seen a book I could profitably give a child of five to read! And he ought to have the facts as the answer to childish inquiries long before he can read books on the subject. I also feel quite certain that sex-instruction in classes is, to be greatly deplored. It is impossible for any teacher of sex-facts so to gauge the needs of the individuals in the class that he can answer the questions of some without wounding the susceptibilities of others. For a child to be told more than his questing mind seeks to know is bad whether in mathematics or sex.<sup>1</sup>

The mother is the best person to answer all questions about sex that are asked by either boy or girl up to the age of eight. After that the boy's allegiance turns more to his father, the girl's remaining with her mother generally till the age of puberty.<sup>2</sup> A mother should not be talking to a boy when he is approaching puberty about sex, lest, as Dr. Rees points out in his excellent paper *The Sex Education of Children*, it keeps the boy too dependent on his mother and hinders his psychological development.<sup>3</sup>

Of course in some cases one or both parents may shirk their responsibilities. They may be so much the victims of the old-fashioned taboos on sex that they simply will not do

<sup>1</sup> See the strong protest of Stekel in *Conditions of Nervous Anxiety and their Treatment*, p. 433. "Enlightenment *en masse* in schools is a monstrous idea, whose execution would certainly start countless sexual traumas, etc."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dr. Crichton-Miller, "The Emotional Development of the Boy and Girl," in *The New Psychology and the Teacher*, pp. 77 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> A warning may be added here against allowing a child over two years of age to sleep in his parents' room, where the act of intercourse may be seen or heard. Many neuroses have such an experience as their causative, infantile factor.

it or are so embarrassed that they make a complete mess of it. If this be so, a teacher, minister, scoutmaster, or doctor may be found, but unless he is in the child's confidence *and is himself adjusted to sex*, it is a compromise very far from ideal.

Two other points may be mentioned in passing. One of the discoveries of modern psychology is the extraordinarily early age at which sex manifestations appear. A child of two or earlier may discover the pleasure of handling the genital parts of the body. Parents, and notoriously nurses, to soothe a child sometimes stroke it in those parts. We must be careful not to lead a child to think it "wrong" to be curious about his own body and the bodies of children of the opposite sex, and even manipulation must not be condemned since condemnation brings in that emotional factor which we want to avoid. A middle course can be steered by drawing off the child's attention unobtrusively to some new interest. Of course all unnecessary touchings of the parts by mothers and nurses should be avoided.

The other point worth making is that sex is unclean to a great many people, not only because of the Victorian "hush-hush" taboo placed on it for so long, but because of what some have called the rude jest of Nature by which the excretory organs and sex organs are so closely associated. Without immodesty arising we need to avoid stressing that the excretory functions are "dirty." They are not really more so than any other functions of the body. If we can avoid this emphasis with children we can to some extent save things sexual from coming under the same category as things unclean. "Modesty," as Dr. Rees very truly says, "is something we have to teach the child, and I think it is an attitude which must be evolved as a mechanism for the protection of something that the child has every reason to be proud of possessing, instead of being a method by which something shameful is hidden away."

It is hoped that parents who are in the right relation with their children and with the facts included in this chapter before them will now know how to answer such questions as their children ask and how, without making a set occasion,



to impart the information set out at the beginning of the chapter as requisite to each individual before puberty is established.

I append a carefully selected bibliography of cheap but reliable literature.

FOR PARENTS DEALING WITH CHILDREN OF BOTH SEXES UP TO 10.

*Where did I come from, Mother?* With an introduction by MAUDE ROYDEN. (Mills & Boon.) 1s.

*How Baby is Born*, K. DE SCHWEINITZ. (Published by Routledge.) 2s. 6d.

FOR PARENTS DEALING WITH GIRLS FROM 10-15.

*The Growing Girl*, DR. EVELYN SAYWELL. With preface by DR. CRICHTON-MILLER. (Methuen & Co.) 1s.

FOR PARENTS DEALING WITH BOTH GIRLS AND BOYS.

*Sex Teaching*, A. HERBERT GRAY, M.A., D.D. (National Sunday School Union, 4 Black Friars Lane, London, E.C.4.) 2s. 6d.

FOR ADOLESCENTS OF BOTH SEXES.

*The Human Body*, MARIE STOPES. (Putnams.) 3s. 6d.

*Men, Women and God*, A. HERBERT GRAY. (S.C.M.) 3s. 6d.

FOR GIRLS FROM 16-20.

*The Challenge of the Adolescent Girl*, VERONA DORIS LESTER. (Teachers and Taught, 4 Fleet Lane, E.C.4.) 9d.

*From Girlhood to Womanhood*, DR. ELIZABETH SLOAN CHESSE. (Alliance of Honour, 112 City Road, E.C.1.) 2s.

FOR MARRIED PEOPLE.

*Successful Marriage*, A. HERBERT GRAY. (Rich & Cowan.) 3s. 6d.

*Men, Women and God*, A. HERBERT GRAY. (S.C.M.) 3s. 6d.

*The Hygiene of Marriage*, ISABEL HUTTON, M.D. (Heinemann Medical Books Ltd.) 5s.

*The Sex Factor in Marriage*, HELENA WRIGHT, M.B., B.S. Introduction by REV. DR. A. HERBERT GRAY. (Williams & Norgate.) 3s. 6d.

*Parenthood: Design or Accident?* MICHAEL FIELDING. Preface by H. G. WELLS. (Noel Douglas.) 2s.

*Education for Christian Marriage*, ed. A. S. NASH. (S.C.M.) 7s. 6d.

FOR ALL PARENTS.

*What Mothers must tell their Children*, DR. MARY SCHARLIEB. This pamphlet includes information about venereal disease. (Published by the British Social Hygiene Council, Tavistock House South, London, W.C.1.) 1½d.



*"The men and the women who are found complaining that in them the urge of sexual desire is almost uncontrollable are nearly always people who are not enjoying any happy or bracing fellowship with members of the opposite sex. But when such fellowship is a regular feature of the day's work, the personal and private problems of sex do really admit of a comparatively easy solution."—The Relation of the Sexes, Copec Commission Report, vol. iv. (Longmans.)*

MRS. GRUNDY, whose word determines what is and what is not allowed by convention, has done one outstanding disservice. Though her influence in this matter is quickly waning she has to some extent spoiled the idea of companionship between men and women. Such companionships continue, as they are bound to, but Mrs. Grundy, by being suspicious about them, has tended in many cases to make them furtive, clandestine and uncomfortable. Seeing which, Mrs. Grundy wrings her hands and thinks the world is going to the devil and says openly that when she was young, people never did such things, little realizing that her inability to see two young people together without drawing nasty conclusions is chiefly the cause of the secretiveness with which such companionships are indulged in. *She has failed to distinguish between companionship and flirting*, and I want here, if I can, to make that distinction. For the first is one of the greatest gifts of God to men and women. The second is a wrong which often has serious consequences. The convention that it is weak for a man to confess that he likes talking to women and that a girl is forward and immodest if she takes an obvious joy in her men friends, is fundamentally false and absurd and a denial of the wisdom of God in making us as we are. The man who says he "cannot stand girls" is abnormal and the girl who "cannot see anything in men" must, obviously, be blind! An adult girl who has only girl friends is not quite normal any more than a man is normal who only has men friends. I have noticed

repeatedly that girls prefer to work under a foreman rather than a forewoman.<sup>1</sup> And for both sexes at work and play, it is probable that fellowship with the opposite sex calls out qualities which otherwise are left dormant. Thus in spite of what is said on page 38, a man can advise a woman where another woman would not be listened to, and a woman nurse can get a response from a male patient where a male nurse would be hopeless. "Male and female created He them . . . and God saw all His work that it was very good."

Let me quote from the Copec Commission Report on *The Relation of the Sexes* (p. 21): "Those objectionable moralists who, suffering themselves from mental sex perversion, are fond of advising young men to 'shun all 'going with girls' have just this minimum of justification, that 'going with girls' does still in many cases mean only frivolous and foolish trifling. But friendly fellowship with women may mean one of the most interesting, stimulating and saving things in life for normal and virile men, while friendship with men may have similar values for women."

God made us different from one another, not merely physically, but mentally, æsthetically and spiritually, that we might be to one another as music to words, making together the song that God wants to hear His children sing. We see this illustrated in the different phases of our communal life. That women have been granted the vote is not an advantage because we have so many million more voters, but because we have a different kind of voter with a different and complementary point of view. To have women members of Parliament is not, surely, merely a yielding to the demands of women to have the privileges of men, but to do a service to the nation which only a woman can do. It is very significant to find Miss Margaret Bondfield presiding over a meeting called to attempt to solve a threatened railway strike. Think of the tremendous progress from the point of

<sup>1</sup> A woman in a position of authority sometimes manifests what can only be described as an intoxication of power. Headmistresses, matrons, and manageresses are sometimes noteworthy in this respect. The "intoxication" which sometimes leads them to be tyrants may be due to an unconscious compensation for being unmarried, or an unconscious compensation for a repressed inferiority complex.

view which regards woman only as a potential wife and mother to that which appoints a woman to deal with a difficult labour quarrel among men and to be a member of the Cabinet. No one can fail to notice the questions in Parliament in which Lady Astor is most interested; they are questions concerning the home, the welfare of the working woman and her baby. This companionship of men and women in all the direction of the state is a new and glorious thing in politics. In medicine the same kind of thing is happening. A woman doctor is often far more able to understand some women patients and far more able to minister to them, especially in childbirth and in gynæcological diseases, than a man may be. And women have certainly not found it difficult to take the highest qualifications which the medical profession can confer. One may look for development in method, technique and discovery both in surgery and medicine from the inclusion in the work of research of the woman's point of view. Personally, I welcome with all my heart women ministers because they will see aspects of truth which we men have missed. Particularly in private-interview work, which includes the hearing of confessions and of the intimate problems of people's lives—work which one tends to think is a more important part of the minister's work than preaching—women will be able to deal with some women<sup>1</sup> in a way that is almost impossible except to the most sympathetic and understanding men. In the same way the inclusion of women jurors, barristers and magistrates will mean that the community will be more efficiently served, and justice more effectively administered. If these companionships are such an advantage in business and the professions, it is absurd to say that men and women on ordinary levels of companionship have nothing to give one another for the common enrichment of life.

This view finds great support in the attitude of Jesus to women. If Mrs. Grundy has a repressing influence on companionships to-day, hardening our conventions, we may

<sup>1</sup> Some women, on the other hand, find it impossible to open their hearts to one of their own sex, or to put confidence in a woman physician.

notice how much more powerfully convention prevailed amongst the Jews in the time of Jesus. We have no space to enter into an estimate of the place woman held among the Jews. Suffice it to say that her value was not her personality but her sex. With tremendous daring, Jesus made friends, not only with Jewish women, but with a Samaritan woman who was all but an outcast<sup>1</sup> and with women whose character must have provoked not only criticism, but the bitterest scorn on the part of His enemies. Jesus threw the mantle of His friendship round Mary Magdalene, careless what the world might think or say, conscious only that she needed a friend. No other great teacher in the world's history has ever invited a woman like Mary Magdalene to be His friend. And in all this we may remember that He was not trying to be a sexless person; He was certainly not one who could "see nothing in women"; He accepted their companionship as one of the most beautiful gifts of His Heavenly Father, and in the case, say, of Mary and Martha, there was much which He received from them as well as gave to them.

Like all other good things, this companionship is capable of being spoiled and it is the unwise spoiling of a good thing that I call flirting. It is nothing less than a type of sexual seduction. Let me say one word first to men, including married men who are often—especially when unhappily married—the biggest sinners in this matter. Here is a parable. You may be happily employed in a munition factory for years, but if you go dropping lighted matches in the explosives room you will soon spoil your own life and somebody else's. If you cannot leave lighted matches alone, throw up your job and get another. The companionship of women is a very beautiful thing and you may enjoy it for years. But at all costs don't drop matches about. You are never quite sure when you are in the explosives room and when you are not, and remember that an explosion may be

<sup>1</sup> Or why did she come to the well at noon? Women draw water from the well, in the East, early in the morning, or in the evening. Was she not avoiding her own kind and avoiding the gossip of the well-head?

silent and none the less disastrous. If you cannot leave lighted matches alone, keep to the companionship of men.

Perhaps this had better be put a little more plainly. You danced with a girl. She was attractive and pleasing. You took her home from the dance. It was a wonderful moonlight night. She was beautifully dressed; her eyes were shining with excitement; she seemed utterly desirable and before the night was over you strayed into the explosives room, possibly without knowing it. Then the word too much, the look that meant then more than you meant afterwards, the touch too intimate and the explosion followed. As George Macdonald wrote:

"Alas, how easily things go wrong!  
A sigh too deep, or a kiss too long.  
There follows a mist and a weeping rain,  
And life is never the same again."

I know some men think there is nothing to worry about in such an adventure; that I am being sentimental and making a fuss about nothing. "Jolly nice girl," they say to themselves as they walk home and then they dismiss the whole business and perhaps the girl does too—but perhaps she doesn't. If there has been what I have described as an explosion, you have done a wrong thing to her. You have kindled a tumult in her being. She would rather die than let you know it. A vague unrest has possessed her; she may get over it if she has some very good ideals to help her, but it may spoil her relationship with men, making her a little afraid of them and more than a little afraid of the whole subject of sex, since it seems to unleash such tumultuous passions within her. You weren't a companion, you were a flirt. "This is up to the girl," said a man to whom I put this point of view after he had all but spoiled a young girl's life. But even if a man is master of the situation and consciously only playing a game, is it chivalrous, manly, or even fair to assume that she is completely mistress of the situation and can stop when she likes? It is not, because human nature from the first is against her and, to be perfectly frank, embracing, kissing, "petting," and intimate touching

are naturally the instinctive preliminaries to sexual intercourse and those who indulge in them on the understanding that they will go thus far and no further, inevitably put themselves to a most unnatural strain, apart from the strain they impose on others.

My experience forces me to express even more plainly the danger of intimate touching. I have just returned to write this from a kind of interview only too common. An unmarried woman of thirty-three appeals for help. She has been brought up in a Christian home though in ignorance of sex. She is a Christian worker of some eminence. During a Continental holiday she becomes "friendly" with a married man. She is flattered by his attentions. He is staying at the same hotel. One night while dressing for dinner, there is a knock on her bedroom door. Thinking it is a maid she calls "come in." The man enters, embraces her, kisses her, and since she is half-undressed he finds it easy to touch her body in an intimate way. To make a long story short and it will yet be a very long story before she regains self-mastery—she comes to me, her mind torn with conflict. On the one hand she wants to return to a normal life of Christian service. On the other hand she is passionately in love with this man and possessed by such uncontrollable feelings of sexual desire that now scarcely a night passes but her imagination conjures up the scene in the bedroom and she touches herself as he touched her. Masturbation becomes a habit. It is hard to blame her. There is so much blame attachable to her parents and her assailant. It is easy to tell her what to do. A letter to the man breaking off all future rendezvous, a determination to end the relationship before three lives are ruined, a steady facing of her own problem as dealt with in Chapter VIII and a renewed spiritual life beginning with the acceptance of forgiveness. Easy to say, but how hard to carry out. My heart bled for her as she left my room to catch her train home. There is small hope of marriage. It will be a long, severe discipline. Again and again men, whom we will suppose thoughtless rather than cruel, are given to caressing with their hands certain parts of a woman's body, not realizing that by so

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doing they awaken a sexual passion so uncontrollable that it frequently leads to self-abuse on the part of the woman, even if it does not lead to something worse. It is difficult to imagine a more refined cruelty than to arouse sex passion in a girl for whom the normal satisfaction of the passion is denied for religious and moral reasons; who hates herself if she falls into bad habits and for whom marriage is as unlikely as it can be. She is often condemned literally to years of mental torment, not only by the roused sex feelings, but by the feelings of guilt, anxiety and worry with which the experiences are surrounded. Again and again women have complained to me of the way in which men have touched them under their clothes or in some intimate way. Such men may not realize the feelings they are arousing in highly-sexed girls, but one is compelled to believe that many do know what they are doing and in spite of this pursue this despicable form of tyranny to satisfy or excite their own perverse desires without respect and reverence for the personality of the victim. In some cases, no doubt, the victim is willing, but the willingness of a person to be wronged does not make wrong doing right or justifiable. The moral evil of what some men have called in my presence "going the whole hog" is scarcely less than the moral evil of taking liberties whose only possible justification would be that they sought consummation in the act of complete intercourse. As Dr. Sherwood Eddy says,<sup>1</sup> "Some promiscuous petting, except for the financial element, is very close to prostitution in principle. He who uses a woman to satisfy his own sensual desires, regardless of her worth or welfare, prostitutes that woman whether with or without her consent, with or without pay." The strongest words are necessary in relation to those forms of flirting, in which erogenous zones of the body are fondled and sex feelings roused which are never satisfied. I have seen severe neuroses set up by this form of "petting"—as the Americans call it—particularly in the case of victims previously imperfectly acquainted with the facts of sex. Moreover, however lightly a man may think of philandering, he has not really escaped. He has dribbled

<sup>1</sup> *Sex and Youth*, p. 43.



away in harmful frivolity something that belongs to another who may be keeping herself for him with far finer self-control. The gold he spends like this belongs to her, and when she comes to him as his wife he finds he has not quite so much in the bank of love to give. Flirts rarely marry happily, for when they come to be married they are bankrupt of love.

Obviously this only wants a little turning round to apply to women. I think most women do not quite understand how easily the feelings and passions of men are roused, and a man's feelings are not easily quieted once they are roused. Matthew Arnold sings,

"We cannot kindle when we will  
The fires that in the soul reside."

No, and we cannot extinguish them either! Women will not misunderstand, if, having seen a good deal of tragedy, I implore them not to misuse the tremendous power which every real woman has over every real man. Don't rouse the fires of passion which a young man cannot control, which you cannot control, and which the tears of that man's mother will not be able to quench. Whatever the standard of the set in which you find yourself, men who flirt with girls end by despising the very girls who have given them a few hours' pleasure and who know in their hearts that it is despicable to use their womanhood to win servitude even if the servitude be only flowers, chocolates and "the pictures."

All this specially applies to a beautiful girl. The Rev. Dr. Herbert Gray has very finely said that when he sees a beautiful girl, he wants to do two things. One is to thank God for making so lovely a thing and the other is to say a prayer that she may have special help given her for her difficult lot.<sup>1</sup> Because, obviously, she has such a tremendous power over men that she could easily lead them to make fools of themselves. She could so easily become habitually hungry for the praise and admiration which men will give her. It must be exciting and delightful to know yourself to be beautiful. Men will forgive a beautiful woman anything

<sup>1</sup> *Men, Women and God.*



and do anything for her, but since God gave this gift—and that is the answer to vanity about it—it can be used for Him. If it can make men fools it can also draw out their best. Let it be consecrated.

This also may be said definitely. Never go into marriage on the wave crest of a flirtation, for love is the only satisfactory basis of marriage, not physical attraction, but love, which involves a harmony of all the characteristics of both. Marriage with love is a greater happiness than any one of us deserves, but marriage without love has only one word to describe it, and that word is Hell.

One other thing about comradeship needs to be said. It is not always easy in British life for a man to get to know a girl without laying himself open to the *charge* of flirting, however unfair the charge. If he escapes this charge he may easily be accused of "having intentions." It is hard for him to get to know her as well as he ought to know a girl before asking her to marry him, without appearing to many to have already gone so far with her that he cannot honourably withdraw. For some men, social functions are the only chances of getting to know girls, and if so, what can the word "know" really connote? For both men and girls, during the excitement of a dance, are very different from the same people at business or in a domestic environment, and many marriages are mistakes because those who contracted them only saw one another under one kind of condition—generally an easy kind in which the body was dressed in nice clothes and the mind in nice moods—and each imagined that the other was always equable, charming and good-tempered. It would be well if Christian people would, to a greater extent, open their homes and let young people meet one another there. This does not solve the whole problem, but it would be a valuable contribution toward solution especially for "only children," who for this very reason have special problems of their own and are slower than others to recognize where comradeship ends and flirting begins. In many cases churches and homes are freely opened to young folk for social intercourse.

Some of us who motor home along country lanes late at

night are concerned to find youths and girls as young as fourteen embracing one another in varying degrees of intimacy, an intimacy which in many cases slips into the most intimate of all embraces, though this at the outset was in the mind of neither. It would remedy this if wise and understanding fathers and mothers encouraged their children during adolescence to bring their friends of the other sex into the home, allowing them some time alone, but redeeming the relationship from that furtive, clandestine thing in which so many kinds of harm are done. Senior men and women who are not parents could also do much good by letting their homes be used for free and happy social intercourse between young folk. Parents with only one child, or with children all of the same sex, should most certainly invite to their homes young people of similar ages of the opposite sex, otherwise their children will grow up without that naturalness in regard to members of the opposite sex which is so delightful a feature of large families of both boys and girls. One hopes that the youth of our land will develop Youth Movements in ways which encourage physical fitness, fresh air and healthy companionship.

On the other hand many will ask, "How far is this comradeship to go?" One knows homes opened thus to young people where the worst has happened. In this matter all we can do is to appeal to individuals to pull themselves up and ask whether any given friendship is comradeship or whether it is flirting or whether it is love—remembering that true love exercises restraints—and to view it from all points of view, for it may be remembered also that what to one may be perfectly innocent may be to another dangerous playing with fire. A man may think his relationship to a girl is pure friendship—though there is a lot of cant and hypocrisy in the matter, for who has not heard the hypocrite say, "I'm old enough to be her father;" or "I'm married and have got half a dozen children," or "I was only trying to be a brother to her"?—while a girl's sex feelings may be in indescribable tumult or vice versa.

However hard it is to lay down a principle which shall distinguish comradeship from flirting, those who are concerned

may at least ask themselves whether the relationship is furtive or open, wholesome or productive of evil thoughts, tending towards poise and harmony within, or the rousing of merely physical, sexual desire. Does it call out the best or does it lead to self-condemnation? When you think of marriage, would this relationship enrich marriage or impoverish it? Would you advise it for others or condemn it in a Christian society? Is it spiritual or merely physical?

Jesus demands that we shall not treat another in a way we should hate to be treated ourselves or have our loved ones treated, and perhaps the only test we need apply to a relationship to discover whether it is that God-given thing I have called comradeship or that cruel and evil thing called flirting is to ask ourselves whether we dare have that relationship confronted by Him.

## THE TRUE APPROACH TO MARRIAGE

*"Sex is an ever-living fire that nothing will extinguish. It is like that flame which Moses saw on Mount Horeb, burning the bush which yet was not consumed. 'Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.'"*—HAVELOCK ELLIS, in *Sex and Civilization*. (Allen & Unwin.)

THE most glorious fact of sex is that it makes falling in love possible. The most wonderful things in life are generally inexplicable. True love always is. A man meets a score of girls and some of them become his friends. A girl meets a score of men and some of them become her friends. Then a girl meets a man or a man meets a girl, and, whether it be after quite a long comradeship or immediately, matters not, a divine spark passes, and in a true sense the two are two no longer, but one. There has been a new creation.

The two-celled heart beating with one full stroke, Life.

Another of God's beautiful dreams, that He dreamt in the never-never ages before the world was, has come true. Another of God's perfect purposes has been fulfilled. Poets and musicians of every race and age have tried to imprison this experience in word and song, but always with a sense of inadequacy—and the greater the genius the greater the consciousness of failure—for the experience of love cannot be thus imprisoned. It bursts through language and escapes. It is as elusive and glorious and compelling as a summer dawn. If it be true love it brings man and woman to their highest, makes them more like God than ever before. It is the point at which all the loveliest possibilities in personality break into flower.

Falling in love ought to be a very religious matter, for love is not only within the sphere of religion, but the centre of religion. Any man who does not feel drawn nearer to God on falling in love may well ask whether he has fallen into lust instead of love. Every minister has noticed the way in which lovers will often come to Church. Their love has

drawn them nearer to God and they have become one in Him—a fact which sidesmen who insist on their having two hymn-books do not altogether recognize! Lovers should realize that God, who is always trying to break into their consciousness, who gets through to us in a daffodil or a sunrise or an oratorio or a little child's eyes, can a thousand times more easily and more powerfully break through to them in their love for one another. For though their love—just because they are still incarnate—is bound to have physical elements in it, the thrill and rapture of it are essentially divine. And those physical elements are not less divine because physically manifested. When love is raised to its highest power because another human being is loved supremely so that the whole personality is consecrated with unselfish, out-going love for another, then the lover is not only at his best, but he shares, as never before, the very nature of God. In one mood love may be a tumultuous passion and in another a radiant calm, beautiful, supremely mysterious joy, but whatever it is, it ought to be recognizable as divine. The Guiding Hand, which has been busy since before babyhood with every life, has brought real lovers into the fulfillings of a divine purpose. So if John begins to write poetry, don't laugh at him too much. The fact that John, the stolid bank clerk, in his little blue suit and billycock hat, goes out and sits on a fence in the country and watches the sun set or the moon rise and writes verses, only shows that his face is towards God. There is no tragedy here, unless you have to read the poetry. It is a matter for rejoicing that an ordinary mortal is possessed by the sense of the divine.

Let me say one word to parents who are troubled in mind about the falling in love of their children. A score of times parents have sat in my room in great distress over the falling in love of an only child. Here is a typical case. The parents have but one child, a son. They have not omitted anything that it was within their reach to do in the bringing-up of that child. He has had a good education and a good business training, and all his parents' dreams have centred on him. They have also dreamt of the kind of girl he ought to marry. Then to their great distress he falls deeply in love

with someone of whom the boy's mother says, "She is not nearly good enough for our boy." Of course, if there is reason to believe that the boy is swept off his feet by a mere infatuation, if physical attraction is the only factor between them, or if the disparity in ages be too great, then it is only natural that parents will want to save their son from a marriage that cannot be a success. But on the basis of wide experience, I would like to urge parents to look at the situation all round. If they push their interference too far, one of two things will happen. The first is that the love-urge of the boy will lead him to marry the girl in spite of their wishes, possibly clandestinely, or at any rate he will keep away from his parents in order to protect his wife from their attack. On the other hand if the parents get their way they may even succeed in getting him to marry the girl who is *their* choice. If they do, that is a greater tragedy still, because he may never cease to regret it nor to lay his unhappiness at the door of his parents. If, instead of these alternatives, they say to themselves, "She may not be our choice, but she is his; he is old enough to make a choice even though *we* cannot see what he sees in her," (for love so far from being blind, has a deep and penetrating insight), and if they, in this spirit, bring her into their home, they will gain a daughter where otherwise they would lose a son. Moreover, their love, working on the character of their future daughter-in-law, is much more likely to change her in any way she needs to be changed than their hostility, to which she will be deeply sensitive, however they try to hide it, and their son will become much more deeply attached to his parents if they accept his choice of a wife instead of wanting him to accept their choice.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A warning to parents whose children are growing up may perhaps be inserted here. If a mother is *excessively* tender and emotional toward her sons, or the father toward his daughters, there may be a psychological "fixation" of a boy to the mother, or a girl to the father, which will make marriage seem such a "break-away" that it may be unhappy or not even tolerable. Indeed, mother-daughter and father-son fixations are frequently found and are equally disabling. They are only too real and too common, and they do not automatically break up at marriage.

Let me now try to face, in the hope of helping some young people, some of the dangers in the paths of lovers. In the first place, almost everybody before the end of the teen age is in love with love. By this I mean being in love with the idea of being in love. Moreover, we have all read a number of novels with heroes and heroines from whose characters we have collected certain facts which we think ideal. The tendency is that on the first person of the opposite sex with whom we become really friendly we should heap all these virtues, pretend they are there, and fall in love with an idealized person rather than with the person as he or she is. If marriage be undertaken in such a case, it can only be a sequence of disappointments and disillusion. Secondly, it is dangerously easy in the teen age to confuse real love with physical attraction. The latter can be exceedingly strong, a fact the explanation of which goes right back into the animal world, and often the desired person seems so desirable that the critical faculty is practically inhibited. Every psychologist knows that when the sex instinct, especially in its physical appeal, comes in at the door, reason and judgment fly out at the window. Perhaps the test is sufficient for the lover to ask whether he enjoys conversation with her, involving the exchange of ideas and aspirations. If he finds there is a physical affinity, but neither mental nor spiritual affinity, he should ask himself whether he is really in love at all, because physical attractiveness, though sometimes overwhelming in its strength, has a terrible way of disappearing after marriage, and to be satisfied with it is to act as though we were merely bodies and miss the best thing in marriage. How often one has seen a fine man leave on one side girls of depth of character, sterling qualities, and kindred interests, and marry some silly, fluffy empty-head with a pretty face and nice clothes whom he has only seen when she has been in a pretty frock and a fascinating mood. Generally such a marriage turns out to be either an obvious disaster, or else that compromise which aims at mutual tolerance solely for the purpose of keeping private and respectable a situation full of enmity, disappointment, self-reproach, disillusion,



bitterness, and contempt. Physical attraction is, of course, a perfectly normal, valuable and beautiful thing, and it may lead to mental and spiritual attraction, but at any rate lovers should wait until it does.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, the lover should have no reserves concerning himself after he has given himself to the beloved. He must preserve inviolate the confidences of other people, but let him not keep in reserve any facts about his own life. If there is a skeleton in the cupboard, open the door.\* If there have been sex adventures with others, let everything be known. If there is anything which ought to be revealed, let it be revealed now and then covered for ever by mutual love of both. Don't let there be anything to be "found out," or anyone in the world whose presence is concealed from the beloved, accidentally to meet with whom would be, to say the least, an embarrassment.<sup>2</sup> Not to do this may seem later to the beloved to be marriage obtained under false pretences.

In order that these three things may have their place, society ordains an engagement, during which it may be ascertained whether real love is the link between the lives. The cave man knew nothing of an engagement, and it may be supposed that he made some tragic mistakes. At the same time, an engagement, even between those who love each other, is a very serious nervous strain. I suppose it is this strain that makes it possible for the lover to do characteristically queer things. We dismiss aberrations in lovers with, "Oh, he's in love."

A word may be added here to engaged people who feel this sense of strain and who are distressed at the depressions and often jealousies incident to this period. Jealousy is generally a symptom of a repressed inferiority complex. A man is assessing himself so low that he fears that anyone with better assets may steal his beloved. He could often find peace by realizing that his girl does not love him because he is clever or handsome or rich, but because he is just himself. He ought to be glad that others admire his choice. It shows

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rosalind and Tom Seddon in Mr. Walpole's *Wintersmoon*.

<sup>2</sup> I think there are exceptions to this rule. I also think they are very rare, especially if the lovers are young.

his discrimination and supports his good taste! During an engagement, however, strain is often caused because the mind is turned in upon itself; the lover is asking himself or herself endless questions. Are we really meant for each other? Shall we really make a success of it? Are we really true mates? Am I really in love? And in some cases of strain a mental torture follows.<sup>1</sup> Part of the answer is that you can make yourself doubt anything if you ask yourself questions about it long enough. Part of the answer is that any emotion—anger, for instance—fades in intensity if you keep contemplating it, and love is an emotion. The other part of the answer is that marriage is an adventure concerning which there can never be mathematical certainty beforehand. No real test has been made in *experience*. Questioning has been speculative and in so many cases the solution is in the experience. *Solvitur ambulando*. Once lovers are reasonably sure, the shorter the engagement the better.

Others, on the other hand, are not in any doubt. They are quite sure. Many of them are so sure, it must be admitted in these days, that they forestall the marriage ceremony and come together in physical intimacy before they are legally bound to each other.

This is a problem we must try to consider in viewing the true approach to marriage, for it is by no means the problem of merely lustful young people, but the honest questioning of many sincere hearts, and no mere dismissal of this intimacy as "wrong" or "immoral" is sufficient.

"We love each other truly and deeply," young people have said to me, "what difference does a ceremony make to our love? We find ourselves in an economic situation, for which we are not responsible, which postpones marriage. How can it be wrong for us to express our love in a physical way? You have spoken often enough of the evils of repressing the instincts. The conventions of society are cruel and meaningless. Why should we take any notice of them?"

<sup>1</sup> ~~Forster~~ maintains that the idea of marriage always awakens in a young girl "a kind of anguish and disgust" until she is certain that she has found someone whom she truly loves. Then it disappears.—*Hygiene of Marriage*, p. 479.

As I write these words I can see the eager faces of a dark-haired young man of fine physique, and one of the prettiest girls I have ever met, with fair, shingled hair and blue eyes, as together they leaned forward from two chairs in my interview-room and asked me such questions as I have set down above.

Let us look at the question as sincerely as we may, admitting, what I think must be admitted, that the words "moral" and "immoral" are not the words which apply. I am not, then, at the moment, asking whether physical sex-intimacy before marriage is moral or immoral. I am asking whether it is a true way through an acknowledged difficulty, whether its results are those claimed for it in certain quarters; whether it leads to the mastery of sex. For my own part I am convinced that intimacy before marriage is so far from being ideal that if young people will honestly weigh the following considerations at a time when they are not in the grip of physical desire, they will practise restraint for themselves and for society and for the sake of little lives for which they may become responsible.

The satisfaction of the sex-instinct in physical intimacy is a thing that has a far-reaching effect on personality. In this it is quite different from, say, the satisfaction of the hunger instinct. The latter has comparatively little effect on the mind except that somnolence which all preachers at afternoon services have noticed. The former has a deep, psychological significance which can hardly be exaggerated. If it were not so, even the taboo on sex-intimacy before marriage would not be capable of producing those feelings of regret and fear and sometimes repulsion and disgust which, many folk have told me, follow the sex act outside marriage. Those feelings themselves condemn intercourse outside marriage. They show that it is an incomplete psychological experience and capable of setting up "anxiety" and nervous strain. Within marriage, intercourse is deeply satisfying if the wife or husband is still loved. Few experiences produce such a sense of inner harmony.

After all, there is a sense in which that act is the uttermost climax of self-giving of which any individual is capable.

and it is less than ideal for a woman to give herself to a man in that way, or a man to give himself to a woman and take her greatest gift unless they are bound by vows which mean lifelong loyalty and fidelity. I know at once that a hot protest will rise to the lips of many lovers on this point. "But we *do* mean to give ourselves to one another for ever," they will say; "that's the whole point." But self-giving can only be consummated in the kind of life which marriage alone makes possible. The sex act may be its climax, physically expressed, but the home, with the economic responsibilities involved, are parts of such self-giving. A man and woman are not perfectly united—even if the sex act has taken place—if they are not united economically. If therefore the sex act takes place before marriage, not only is the physical expression taking place without its proper background, a symbol without the whole of the union symbolized, but the pair are giving something which, at that stage, they have no right to give, for the simple reason that if the sex act is to be consummated in its deepest sense it must be rooted, not only in vows of lifelong loyalty, *but in a life so organized that such vows can be adequately honoured.*

Further, my experience quite frankly, not in one case, but in scores, is that young people who truly and honestly love one another do change their minds and drift apart unless some vow of loyalty, made to society as well as to one another, helps them to overcome those factors which tend to cause separation. Most sincere married people would acknowledge an ebb and flow in even the most passionate enthusiasm. They would recognize the value of something that holds them at ebb-tide. Little irritabilities and differences should not cause separation since the tide will come flooding in again and nothing permanently be lost. And if mutual separation be agreed to, can anyone suppose that both have not lost something which will impoverish future marriage with others? Sex emotion cannot be spread widely and ~~en~~joyed deeply. Something has been done in the sex act which binds two natures together as nothing else does and which no subsequent rationalization can undo.

Then young lovers will point out to one that of course they never intend to have children, and that their physical contact would include some means of preventing conception. The subject of birth control we must discuss later, but the writer believes that the first experience of physical intimacy should be spontaneous, without reserve and without fears. Apart from other considerations, none of the means of preventing conception is certain.<sup>1</sup> If a child is born, it is born of a mother whose mind, whatever her theories, has been full for some months of some degree of shame, remorse, and fear (that is, unless she be unusually degraded). I am sure this is the rule. I have married such mothers late in the pregnancy and I have baptized their babies. Beyond all doubt the mother's fears have a harmful effect on the mind of her child which handicaps it possibly more seriously than is known till adult life is reached.<sup>2</sup> Further, every child has a right to a father *and* a mother, and it cannot be ideal for a child to be born into the world at a time when either its father or mother or—as sad events have often shown—both, may repudiate responsibility and seek another mate. Physical sex intimacy should be an act which is one of the foundation stones in the building up of a home.<sup>3</sup>

Even if no child is born the sex act is robbed of the beauty and happiness which are associated with it when the conscience wholly agrees with it, when there is nothing fur-

<sup>1</sup> This is maintained by Sir George Newman, Chief Medical Officer of Health, in his report for 1929. The only exception is sterilization.

<sup>2</sup> I have recently had a case needing psychological treatment in which a large factor in the neurosis was the discovery by the patient that he was born a month after the marriage of his parents.

<sup>3</sup> It is alleged by some that physical sex intimacy is necessary for the health of an adult, whether married or not. Three findings of the British Social Hygiene Council are therefore worth transcribing:

(a) There is overwhelming evidence that irregular sex relations, whether in married or unmarried life, lead to physical, mental and social harm.

(b) There is no evidence from physiology or from experience that, for the unmarried, sexual intercourse is a necessity for the maintenance of physical health.

(c) There is no evidence from psychology or from experience that, for the unmarried, sexual intercourse is a necessity for the maintenance of mental health.—Statement adopted by the British Social Hygiene Council at their meeting on March 22nd, 1926, and reported in *the Journal of Social Hygiene*, December, 1927.

tive or hesitant about it, when remorse and fear do not follow it, and when its natural consequences are looked forward to with joy and glad anticipation.<sup>1</sup>

Turn now to the question of repression. The slogan, "No repression," is repeated and acted upon in a way which shows an ignorance of what repression really is. Psychology is such a young science that even the pundits disagree in their definitions. Small wonder then that ordinary folk misunderstand the term and coin a slogan supposed to be psychologically sound and give it the wider currency in that it suits their natural desires!

Some writers regard true repression as an entirely unconscious activity of the mind, though such process may be consciously begun. Others, among them no less distinguished a psychologist than the late Dr. Rivers,<sup>2</sup> reserve the word "repression" for the process by which we knowingly endeavour to banish things from consciousness and use the word "suppression" for unwitting forgetting.

Avoiding here a technical, though interesting discussion,<sup>3</sup> we may claim the assent of all psychologists when we say that "bottling up" (not to use any technical term) any instinctive energy, though not ideal, will not become pathological or bring disruption to the personality so long as such "bottling up" remains completely conscious to the personality. For this the word suppression should be retained. And with due respect to those who love technical terms it is what our fathers called self-control. The conscious self-control of passionate desire has never done anyone serious harm, though it calls for grit, pluck and determination, and, if long continued, should be directed towards sublimation, that is the harnessing of the instinctive energies to an end, which, though not the originally planned biological goal for which the energy was meant, is yet satisfactory to the highest

<sup>1</sup> The examples of Elise, Genevieve, and Esther, given by Phyllis Blanchard in her essay "Sex in the Adolescent Girl," *Sex and Civilization*, pp. 551-2 (Geo. Allen & Unwin), are powerful arguments against sex relations outside marriage.

<sup>2</sup> *Instinct and the Unconscious*, pp. 17 *et seq.*

<sup>3</sup> I have fully discussed Repression and Self-Control in my book *Psychology and Life* (Hodder & Stoughton), 55.



self and of value to the community.<sup>1</sup> Self-control is good as a mental discipline. But, other things being equal, it is better to choose another road than strain the brakes because the hills on this road are so steep.

It cannot be too strongly asserted that true repression is unconscious. Putting the matter the other way round we may say that the opposite of repression is not expression, but recognition. If a person refuses to acknowledge the existence of such an instinct as sex as some maiden ladies do when, very loftily, they say, "I have no such feelings," then the truer the statement the more dangerous to themselves is their condition. It means that by refusing to accept, control, and direct their sex energies they have driven them underground, into the unconscious part of the mind where they continue to function, but where they can no longer be controlled because they are below the level of the operation of the conscious will. It is there that they will do untold harm, bringing symptoms often unrecognizable as sexual, but arising from the sex repression. If an abscess on the arm be treated by clapping on a bandage and a dressing it may "heal" in a way. The skin may close, but the pus, instead of being got away, is driven into the blood stream. If this should happen, symptoms such as spots on the face, which appear causally to be far removed from an abscess, may appear. The trouble now cannot be controlled and easily treated. The energies of the sex instinct, accepted by the conscious mind and directed and controlled, will do no harm, and can, if properly handled, be the main dynamic of creative energies in which the soul finds self-realization and the community finds benefit. But unacknowledged and pushed into the depths of the mind, like a suppurating abscess, those energies function and throw up into consciousness symptoms like dreams, obsessions or even physical symptoms which seem as remote as can be from sex and yet are caused by the sex repression. The energies deriving from the sex instinct cannot be eradicated for they are innate. They cannot be thwarted or pushed into the depths

<sup>1</sup> See my *Psychology in Service of the Soul*, pp. 158, et seq. (Epworth Press), 3s. 6d.



of the mind without trouble developing. They must be accepted, controlled and directed. This is not repression. It is suppression or conscious self-control. From such control no neurotic harm will develop.

Nothing could be further from the truth than to suppose that the expression of sex energies *at whatever cost* brings harmony to the personality. It brings a temporary physical alleviation only to leave in its place a sense of self-loathing, fear and shame, or, if this be avoided—hardly a compliment to the adventurer—it leaves that sense of dissatisfaction which always follows an expression of pure selfishness, a selfishness all the more despicable when it enters the intimate places of the life of another personality. I set down the following case from my own experience, not from any desire to frighten, but in justice to facts which ought to be more fully realized. Here is a working-class girl of twenty-four; strong, well-developed, robust, and very highly sexed. She is bright and attractive and it is not surprising to learn that she is engaged to a young workman, whom I also interviewed and of whom I formed a high opinion. He also was physically very robust and psychologically passionate. He was honestly trying, in very difficult circumstances, to get a home together so that he, whom I will call Bob, and the girl, whom I will call Martha, might be married. One day Martha came to see me. She had been brought up in a Christian home. She still attended a Bible class. She realized that Bob could not possibly make a home for her for another four or five years. She would then be twenty-eight or nine. Bob's people did not like Martha. They wanted Bob to do better. Martha was working in a town far from her home. They went to "the pictures" sometimes. But they were trying to save. Martha spoke of walks under the trees at night, of close embraces, of Bob's desire to go further. Would it really matter? In her set, she explained, engagement was considered as good as marriage. They were sure to be married. Why should they withhold themselves from one another? Why should their love not be physically expressed?

I need not repeat what I tried to say, for it is all included

somewhere in this book, but I tried to get Martha not to let intimacy happen. I was sure neither of them would regret their restraint. Marriage would be begun with a bad taste in the mouth if either of them let themselves go. I then saw Bob. He thought I was rather early Victorian in my ideas and said so, but he saw my point. He promised that he would refrain. Unfortunately, Martha went to a friend whose advice she valued. This friend, speaking the jargon of psychology without, I am afraid, much knowledge or experience, thought the "bottling up" of such tremendous sex hunger as Martha showed, a very dangerous thing. She conceded, without definitely advising, physical intimacy. That was all Martha wanted to know. She easily persuaded Bob to break his promise to me. Intimacy took place, not once, but many times.

I must hurry over the rest of the sad story. Martha was in a torment of fear lest motherhood should come to her. What in marriage is a beautiful and shy hope became a paralysing, secret fear that never left her night or day. Bob also, beholding her distress, could scarcely do his work. Functional signs which would have put her mind at rest failed to appear. They were probably inhibited by fear since they are largely influenced by mental conditions. A month later they failed to appear again. One night a wild-eyed girl shook my room with her sobs. I can see her now, kneeling at a table in my room, tearing at the wood with her nails. I pleaded with her to come with me at once to a place where medical knowledge, skill and understanding, and a quiet atmosphere, could settle her mind and quiet her nerves. Would she allow me to telegraph to her mother? No, her mother was even then dangerously ill. Martha was sure such a shock would kill her mother. I would have forced her in her own interests to come with me to a woman doctor who, most kindly, is always willing to co-operate with me in my work, but I failed to persuade her to accept my advice. A few days later her body was recovered from a neighbouring river.

It is far from my intention to have that true story merely regarded as an illustration of the terrible results of wrong-

doing. I use it simply to prove that the slogan, "No repression," worked out as Martha worked it out, is, apart from all religious questions, psychologically unsound. It relieves the temporary disharmony set up by the "bottling-up" of the sex urge, but it sets up, in all but the most degraded and least idealistic, a "conscience distress" which is a far greater disharmony—greater in that it is spiritual, not physical, and far more capable of disrupting the whole personality—than the one that is thereby removed.

Some young people speak scornfully of the marriage ceremony as a convention of society and feel that the presence of a "convention" is a good reason for their hostility to it. But it must be remembered that the conventions of society were not arbitrarily inflicted on society. Some youngsters speak as if a committee of old-fashioned, pre-Victorian fogies sat down one fine morning and for lack of other business on the agenda decided that in future people should go through a certain ceremony before they were allowed to be physically intimate.

The existence of a convention of society means that men and women, playing the game of life as we must all play it, came to feel, through much bitter experience and hard thinking, that the game would be fairer for all concerned if there were rules, and those rules were framed with the happiness of the greatest number in view. Without such rules, every young person becoming aware of sex inclinations would be thrown on his or her own resources of reason and experience. Such a course would quickly reduce our life together to chaos. Some conventions are admittedly effete and out of date and must be scrapped. But my experience is that this is not one of them, and I appeal to youth, in a phrase it greatly loves, to "play the game," to make this convention a voluntarily accepted code, and to suspect the individual egotist who scorns the rule and thinks only of himself just as he suspects the individual in Rugby football who has no thought for his side but is only out to get his own way, careless of the consequences to the team.

To many such "playing the game" will be a hard test and seem a cruel limitation of instinctive energies, but in

every game victory for the team depends on such sacrifices, and the finest members of our race will be ready, even at much personal sacrifice, to keep the rules, not only to preserve inviolate the innermost and most mysterious sanctuary of the temple of personality, the sanctity of which, once outraged, is never quite so beautiful again, but because they realize that however the individual may seem to justify his own conduct, that conduct cannot be considered right and cannot therefore be truly justified if its widespread adoption would wreck society. Nor must exceptions to the rules be allowed, for we should always claim our own cases as exceptional and the rules would soon cease to bind anyone. As Canon Streeter says, "If, for example, you say, in framing your rule that engaged couples may behave as if already married, the rule will be stretched to cover couples secretly engaged, and very soon couples thinking of being engaged, couples wondering what it would feel like to be temporarily engaged and so on."<sup>1</sup>

And apart from "the rules of the game" very little experience of practical psychological dealing with people will show a psychologist how often the origin of all kinds of neurotic disturbances—from a mere depression, the origin of which has perhaps sunk into the unconscious, to the more distressing disharmonies—go back to some incident which, like grit in an eye, cannot be assimilated by the personality.

The act of physical intimacy, then, we believe should not take place except between two people who have not only given themselves to one another, but who, knowing the frailties of human nature, the ebb and flow of passion, the added support of vows registered in public and in God's house, and the help of healthy fear of society's opinion,<sup>2</sup> decide that their love shall make a true home, that it shall

<sup>1</sup> *Moral Adventure*, p. 126 (footnote): Those who desire a fuller discussion of the problem dealt with above will find it in an excellent nine-penny pamphlet published by the Student Christian Movement and called *Sex Relations without Marriage*, by Rev. Dr. A. Herbert Gray.

<sup>2</sup> This will be contested, but I leave it. Many of us in business and private life are held more than we know by a fear which dominates us when more ideal motives are temporarily smothered, and much that is called virtue is frightened and therefore suppressed vice.

create and guard and nourish other little lives, and be part of their answer to the love of God.

Why does God bring people to this great joy of true love? The answer is that they may share in His nature, and part of His nature is the joy of creation. I used to think the marriage service was a little bit crude. "It was ordained that children might be brought up in fear and nurture of the Lord and to the praise of His Holy Name." I don't think it is crude now. As Miss Maude Royden has well said: "The instinct of sex is not a grimy secret between two rather shamed human beings, but a great impulse of life and love."

The highest moment of love is not its dawn, but when you thrill to your very soul to see your first-born sleeping quietly on his mother's breast. Then you have become one in a new way and there is the darling symbol of that new-found unity.

If this is so, one last word to the men who have fallen in love. Can you feel already a little hand tugging at your coat? It is your little child to be. He is asking you to put this test to your love. He is saying, "Is this person whom you think you love going to be my mother? If so, please remember me. Please don't give me someone who is merely pretty, someone who is selfish, superficial, vain, shallow. *You* may be able to get on with her, but please remember me. Already, before I am born, you can strike a more terrible blow at me than you will ever strike after I am born."

And will girls who have fallen in love look for a moment at this vision? Here is a little child of your dreams sleeping; sleeping in the infinite arms of God. Before you waken him, and call him from God's arms to be your very own little child, is this lover of yours good enough to be his father? Is he the example you want to set before this sleeping babe? Will he be able to guide this frail little barque through the stormy sea of life?

We may put these tests fearlessly, for true love will stand them, and to ask them and answer them sincerely is the true approach to marriage.

## THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE

*"A right, wise and Christian preparation for marriage will contain three elements: a knowledge of the psychological facts involved; a knowledge of oneself and one's character and how to deal with it under the new circumstances that will arise; and a recognition of the beauty and worth of human love and of the grace and power of God thus poured into human life."*  
—The Relation of the Sexes, Copec Commission Report, p. 140.

*"It is to be recognized that sex is holy as well as wholesome. . . . Anyone who has once understood that will be quite as careful as any Puritan to avoid making jokes about sex; not because it is nasty, but because it is sacred. He would no more joke about sex than he would joke about the Holy Communion—and for exactly the same reason. To joke about it is to treat with lightness something that deserves reverence."*—THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY (Christian Faith and Life).

SURELY the first thing to be said is that we may hearten ourselves by the undoubted fact that there are millions of people in the world who are happily married; who realize that adaptations have to be made and new points of view have to be reached continually, but who have found marriage to be like the exploration of a new and glorious country where fresh views and delights break in on the happy explorers at every succeeding mile.

Not very long ago it was discovered that, owing to some legal defect, marriages which had been celebrated in a certain church were not legal. Many couples thus found that by this legal defect they were not legally bound. To hear some people speak of marriage one might imagine that all or nearly all would gladly hail their new-found liberty and dissolve their partnership. On the contrary not a single one did so. Every one of those couples went quietly to church and got married again.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately the happy marriage is rarely talked of, whereas the unhappy marriages are given prominence. Novels, pictures and plays too often suggest that marriage is on the whole unhappy. I suppose this is due to the

<sup>1</sup> Taken from Bertrand Russell's *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, quoted by Miss Maude Royden, in *Sex and Commonsense*, p. 129. Quoted also by Havelock Ellis.



fact that it is much easier and more piquant to write a novel or play depicting quarrelling, misunderstandings and *mésalliances* than to write about happy married life. Moreover, divorce reports do not tend to deepen one's faith in marriage, and there is a subtle danger in a great deal of the humour associated with marriage. I am the last person to deprecate humour in anything, but it cannot be denied that the English audience has developed the habit of treating marriage as a kind of joke. Of course, if a blushing young wife thinks her husband is the kind of man for whom the world has been waiting for centuries, or if the husband can talk of nothing but the charms of the lady to whom he has been married for six weeks, then to laugh is the only alternative to giving him a dig in the ribs. But the influence of humour is so far-reaching and powerful that to regard the unhappy marriage as a form of joke is to be deprecated.

Speaking of unhappy marriages we shall realize, of course, that a number of people have married for money or social position, or a home, or through fear of being unmarried, or to get a cheap housekeeper, or for lust. They will expect problems to arise if they are sincere with themselves, and I am not so much concerned about their problems, though I want to say a word to them later, because for all there is a way out.

I want now, however, to try to help those who began life together in what they believed to be love, with nothing but *bona-fide* intentions on both sides, and who are beginning to find that their marriage is not turning out happily. Many are not nearly so happy as they hoped to be. Without quite knowing the reason, they find themselves possessed of a secret terror lest for the future there can only be disappointment, disillusionment, a compromise harder and harder to maintain, and a pretence that strains the nerves and spoils the temper.

Let us try and look at some of the causes of this unhappiness.<sup>1</sup> Here is a typical case. A girl and a youth get

<sup>1</sup> I have not attempted to deal with the marriage that is unhappy because one or both parties is suffering from neurosis, as, for example, where a husband marries a "mother-substitute" because emotionally he has never grown up and never broken a "mother-fixation."



married and are perfectly happy for a few months. Then one after another babies come. Obviously a man cannot see as much of his wife as before. She has a whole round of new duties piled on top of those which filled her time before. This makes her tend to separate her life from his. Realizing this the husband begins to get his business into a compartment of his brain that his wife never enters, or perhaps he develops new interests to fill up the time which he once shared with her. Or they begin to have different friends. The new mother wants friends with experience of babies. The husband sticks more and more to his men associates. A divergence begins, which, unless something is done, will lead to separate lives being lived under one roof. I think the cure is simple. I think that each must make the effort to enter into the other's life. A man who does not know what his wife has to do does not know his wife. A man who at times does not *share* in what she has to do and give up time to helping her, or at least watching her, is not qualifying to be her chum. I think he cannot understand what a joy there is in watching the baby being bathed or taking his turn with night duties. I write in all the glow of a recent achievement of bathing three children and putting them to bed without their mother's intervention, and I only forgot to make them clean their teeth and say their prayers. And I think on the other hand that for a man to exclude his wife from his business is foolish. No one expects him, of course, to divulge the confidences given to him in the course of his business or profession. Nor will any worthy wife want him to do so. But I think most women would regard it as a compliment if their husbands discussed their problems with them, and it is frankly amazing how often a woman's different type of mind with its quick intuitions and penetrating insight will throw light on a problem which one has only viewed from one's own angle. At least I find it so, and I think men do not realize what they are missing if they miss that strengthening kind of sympathy which a woman who

Psychological treatment is necessary in such a case. Women who marry a "father-substitute" for neurotic reasons generally wreck a marriage thereby.

loves them is so able and ready to give. To come home in the evenings and say, "I haven't time to listen to your servant worries and your stories of the children. I have got enough worries of my own," is not only a breach of fellowship, but it is an attitude which will deprive a man of much strength of inspiration which might be his through mutual sharing, and it will bring about a divergence of the two lives which in the end will cause unhappiness. It must be remembered, especially in the marriage of the very young, that for both husband and wife, marriage may mean a queer loneliness. Young girls, when one of their number is married, do treat her differently, no longer to the same extent regarding her as one of themselves. She is ejected from one set of friends and not quite accepted into another circle. Nor has she time for her old occupations. Her husband is determined to make her the best possible home, and business duties pulling one way and his young wife pulling the other, bring to some men in early married life a conflict which makes them disappointedly surprised at the lack of what they looked forward to as unbroken bliss. This can only be borne and overcome by the true sympathy and understanding of each for the other. Otherwise there is in each mind a kind of lonely brooding and moping, not far from self-pity, but making for unhappiness. I think the magic word which makes marriage happy is the word "together." I do not, of course, mean by this that selfishness *à deux* which some marriages manifest. To enjoy Paradise can be a very selfish business if others are excluded from a happiness which would be even richer and deeper if it were allowed to enrich the lives of others.

The second reason for many an unhappy marriage is not the divergence caused by the arrival of babies, but the unhappiness caused through their non-arrival. Of course, if two people marry who are nearly related and who fear to have children, or if there is a disease or mental instability which might be passed on, then restraint is to be commended, since it is too late to point out that they never ought to have married at all. But if two people marry and decide that in order to have a good time together they will not have

children, they are laying up for themselves certain unhappiness for the future. No attitude can be more strongly condemned. The reason God brought them together at all was that their love might be consecrated and consummated in sharing with Him His creative power, and what they are really doing is dangerous for they are suppressing an instinct, *after it has been excited*, and failing to carry out the creative function which is the definite purpose of God. On them will descend the Nemesis which comes upon all who deny or suppress their fundamental instincts *after the door has been opened for their harmonious exercise*. Bitterness of spirit, acute disappointment, a nervous irritability and in some cases neurotic breakdown will follow this unnatural procedure, and Nature, denied at the beginning of a marriage, sometimes withholds her gifts to those selfish people who belatedly invoke them. Many married people who could easily have had children in the first few years would now do almost anything to have them, but the gift is withheld.

A third reason for the unhappy marriage is the small squabble or squabbles, unhealed through pride on one or both sides. It is really amazing how often a little squabble about nothing will develop into what might be called the squabbling attitude and lead to a divergence and an unhappiness between two people who really love each other and yet who are too proud to make it up. A girl of eighteen confided to me that her parents had not spoken to one another at all for several years, communicating with each other by notes or by messages through the children. Yet the origin of their quarrel was whether a certain Mr. and Mrs. Jones should or should not be invited to dinner. It is amazing how often a little squabble becomes developed into a mutual hostility. Imagine the nerve strain involved in keeping up such a quarrel for years! The foolish thing that people do is to go on discussing a thing when they are both irritated. If only people had the sense to know when to be silent! If only one of them would say, "Well, let's discuss it another time!" If only a man would take his wife out to tea at a café—since women sometimes seem to prefer an expensive tea in a noisy café to a ten-times nicer tea quietly

over the fire at home—and over the table say, “Do you really mind Mr. and Mrs. Jones coming to dinner? They are great friends of mine.” And I am sure his wife would say, “My dear, we will have them to stay for a week if you like!” Yet in the heat of irritability people will quarrel for hours and maintain an icy aloofness sometimes for days. People who do this do not realize that one sentence—“My dear, I was a fool, forgive me!”—would prove to be a complete solution. Nor do they realize what a warm rush of affection follows the healthy procedure of “making it up.” Some say to each other icily, “Well, let’s agree to differ.” That sounds to me like two animals withdrawing into a corner to lick their wounds before re-entering the battle. The discussion can be continued later when tempers have cooled, and while neither need be convinced by the other, yet the “call off” of “let’s agree to differ” will not be necessary. The fatal thing is to continue a discussion when the atmosphere has become excited and tense; when there is loss of temper on either side.

A further cause of unhappiness is a survival of that ancient superstition which one might call “the lordship of the male.” It is still held in some households that his lordship must be sent off in the morning in a good temper, his breakfast having been nicely prepared and the fire lit to receive him, and that his wife should then set to work to prepare meals, clean the house, look after the children, mend their clothes, and have everything spick and span—including his slippers to warm—and herself looking charming to receive her lord, submissively inquiring his will. All this is of course absurd. No man at his business works harder than most women in their homes, and most men who have ever tried to run a home, even for a short time, will agree that it takes a far higher order of intelligence to run a home smoothly than to run a business, and the man who will come home from business and sit in his slippers before the fire while his wife continues to be burdened by drudgery is not playing the game. The same fallacy of the lordship of the male is seen in the commonly accepted view that the sleep of the father must not be disturbed. The cot is not only on the mother’s side of the bed, but she is expected to do whatever

must be done in the night for a troublesome baby. A woman doctor tells me that if she remonstrates with a mother for taking the baby into her own bed or doing unwise things to pacify him, the mother nearly always replies, "Well, you see, doctor, if baby cries it disturbs his father." In some cases one is bound to admit that the father's nose is as much put out of joint—if the phrase may be permitted—by the arrival of the first baby as is that of the first when the second arrives, and some fathers show a peevish, injured temper which would reveal to any psychologist that he is the biggest baby in the home, being possessed of the strong "*ego*" complex seen in those who have never become adjusted to life and who are infantile underneath, an infantility only the more completely revealed by the bombastic aggressiveness, not far removed from bullying, which such men fondly imagine conceals it.

Another way in which this lordship of the male expresses itself is that in which a husband disburses money to his wife. The wife, who frequently has given up a good salary to be married, ought surely to feel a right to the money necessary to run the home and look after herself and the children. I think also she ought to have a sum of which she is not expected to keep an account, to spend on herself and her friends without her husband asking what she does with it. Frequently, however, a husband gives his wife money in a way that makes her feel that he is doing her a favour, and is even reluctant to do that. If this is so it is not to be wondered at that some women are driven into inferiority and some into resentment by the emphasis on their supposed dependence. Some women, of course, will not feel this. If a wife does feel this it is a simple matter to arrange a banking account made out in both names so that either can draw cheques on what is thought of as a common fund. Let there be mutual trust at least until a reason for distrust appears.

Again, we men say we cannot do housework, and we say we cannot, because we do not like it, but if, for instance, a man has married a teacher, it is very hard to see what qualifications she has which he does not possess for clean-

ing the silver. And though I am sure many men will say that this is poisonous modern nonsense, there would be far greater happiness in many married homes if a husband would help his wife so that they might both have more time for recreation and fun. This outworn, effete theory of the lordship of the male produces the spirit of the law courts—the spirit that emphasizes imagined “rights”—and the spirit of the law courts is not the spirit of love and will never make a happy home.

I know women, university graduates—and I know one very well indeed—who have got married and found that to run a home requires as high an order of intelligence as to run a school. Recently I tried to run a house when the maid was away and when the one who usually does it had a touch of influenza. Now I take my hat off to any woman who can run a home without everybody in it hearing the wheels go round. There seem so many things to remember. I got into the middle of one job and remembered I had not put the potatoes on. I answered the back door and the front-door bell rang. I got the meat in the gas oven and found I had not made the fire up since I lit it. It sulked all the morning. I faced the washing-up and found I hadn't pulled the damper out and there was no hot water. . . . So the miserable day passed. To prepare meals, keep a house clean, mend garments and sometimes make them, supervise home lessons, wash clothes and dishes, even with the help of such maids as still exist who are not liabilities rather than assets, this is a work requiring intelligence, insight, patience, skill and cheerfulness. To do all this without the spirit being crushed beneath it, to do it quietly and radiantly and to do it without adequate help must surely come near to heroism.

On the other hand, in some homes, of course, it is the other way round. You have a woman of dominating and aggressive personality who is petted and spoiled by her husband; a woman who cannot leave the house alone and thinks there were never such worries as her worries, whose imperious temper and irritability make a hectic atmosphere in the home which is hell for any peace-loving man. Not being



strong enough to resist her, he serves with dog-like servility on the principle of peace at any price, and escapes from her whenever he can. I think of a house now which is a god before whom the whole household bows. The wife is the slave of this god. The drawing-room is its holy of holies. On the mantelpiece are vases—whether of the early Woolworth period or of great value I know not—to dust which is a ceremony and a rite. The room looks as if it were never used. It is as “unhome-like” as a room in the British Museum. It made me want to light a big fire, put my feet on the mantelpiece and smoke twist. Here are all the conditions for unhappiness, and perhaps the best thing a husband could do in such a case would be to get somebody to look after the precious house for two or three days and to take her off into the country for the definite purpose of talking the matter out with her and getting her to see that marriage ought to mean that a man’s wife is his greatest chum, that though the first emotional “mushy” relationship wears off, there should be a friendship, deep and true and enduring, and a sharing of all life’s burdens and responsibilities *together*. Marriage is thus a friendly partnership, a joyous, co-operative adventure. The diamond engagement ring gives place to the ring of plain gold, but if the flash disappears something that is lasting, durable and precious remains.

The fifth reason for the unhappy marriage I think I ought to call the problem of the interloper. I do not mean to imply that after marriage a man should have no woman friends nor a woman her man friends. On the contrary. “A woman’s husband is not capable of supplying her with all the male society she should have, however loyally he continues to love and be loved. A wife may be all that an ideal wife should be, but if her husband meets no other woman he will miss the very stimulations and contradictions which might make him a bigger, humbler and more interesting person to live with.”<sup>1</sup> But the problem of the interloper is more sinister and the following is only too typical. A woman gets worried with her home and her children, is

<sup>1</sup> Copec Commission Reports, vol. iv, p. 22.



perhaps not quite so careful about her clothes, does not trouble to "look nice"—a very important thing to most husbands—and becomes, in any case, both jaded and obsessed with her domestic life. Her husband becomes increasingly lonely. In his office is a pretty typist who is lonely also. One day he takes her out to lunch: on another occasion to a theatre and supper afterwards. Lies have to be told to cover the goings and comings and a situation develops. Even if there is nothing more than a kiss it will make an unhappy home. Or perhaps it is the other way round. A woman thinks her husband is dull. He seems immersed in his business or professional concerns. She finds other men bright and attractive and the same kind of problem arises. I have tried to help in many such cases, and the curious thing is the excuses that are made. A man will say he is lonely, that his wife does not give him what he wants and that his relation with his typist is innocent enough. The typist will say that it is "not her funeral," that he offers her friendship for which she is hungry, and "Why shouldn't she have a good time?" and so on. Yet if one turns it round it is easier to make them see daylight. If you say to a man, "How would you like it if you found your wife surreptitiously meeting another man?" Or if you say to the typist, "Supposing you were married, would you like your husband to take girls out to the theatre unknown to you?" then perhaps some prick of conscience will be felt. The point is that if these relationships are indulged in clandestinely it is a breach of fellowship between a man and his wife. And no clandestine meetings would ever take place if loyalty to the marriage vow ("and keep thee unto her so long as ye both shall live"), let alone love, were still operative. If therefore either a man or his wife suspects any third person of being an interloper, even if it be a relation or a lodger, then husband and wife should meet together, talk the matter over and decide, if necessary, to take drastic measures to preserve the fellowship of marriage. We must all be wary of letting love drop to the level whereby the relationship is only maintained when the one to whom we are pledged is charming, nicely dressed and in

high spirits, and which does not come to her aid as a powerful uplifting thing when she is dejected, nervy, worried and even careless. Love must be redemptive and not just die out when it does not get the response it feels it should have.

The sixth reason for the unhappy marriage is what might be called "physical refusal." This is an exceedingly difficult question, and two facts will help us to find the way out of it. A woman does not always realize that, after she has had her first child, a great deal of sex energy is diverted from the enjoyment of intercourse to the care of the child. This, of course, is nature's provision for the care of the children by the mother. But a woman must understand that in man it is not so. In him the sex urge remains as it was, a powerful source of energy still directed to intercourse and its primeval, biological goal. Whether we like it or no, man is by nature a polygamous animal, and if a woman with a child or children suddenly refuses a man all physical relations, she is putting upon him an unfair strain, a strain which may threaten his sense of physical harmony. Where there is love an undue strain will not be inflicted upon the beloved. At the same time a man should realize that to many women physical intercourse becomes distasteful and even repulsive, and he will therefore refrain from forcing a physical intimacy which hurts the feelings of the person he loves or interferes with her necessary amount of sleep. The frequency with which intercourse is indulged in will, of course, depend, where there is love, on the health and moods of the pair. I have had the confidence of those who practise intercourse every morning and every evening, and the confidence of those who find once a month enough. Much depends on the kind of life led. My experience would go to show that a healthy man who does little creative work finds twice a week his average. Those who unconsciously use sex energy in other ways find once in ten days their average. The way out once more will be to talk the matter over and, if possible, to consult a medical man or woman, a psychologist or other adequate friend. It used to be thought—though it was never certain—that half-way between a woman's monthly periods there was a time when

she was less likely to become pregnant, and intercourse during this so-called "safe period" was practised without fear of conception. A Harley Street physician now gives his opinion that this is not so. He writes as follows: "This is the most fertile period as ovulation occurs between the fourteenth and seventeenth day after the beginning of each period: thus the time of the 'safe period' was a mistaken notion, and it is now known that the 'safe period' is, roughly speaking, six days before and six days after each menstrual period, in other words the opposite of what was formerly believed." It would perhaps be safer still to decide that there is no "safe period" in any real sense,<sup>1</sup> and it is here that modern scientific and safe methods of conception control may be, with the advice of a doctor,<sup>2</sup> used. The one way which is condemned by doctor and psychologist alike is the withdrawal of the male organ before the sex act is completed (*coitus interruptus*). This excites both partners without a complete orgasm being realized, and is a likely way of producing neurotic symptoms. The practice cannot be too strongly condemned.<sup>3</sup> The problem is not one which should be shirked, but candidly faced so that harmony and happiness for both man and wife may be maintained.

It will help some women who do not understand themselves if the main reasons for a lack of enjoyment of intercourse are set forth.<sup>4</sup>

A. Physical refusal or repugnance<sup>5</sup> may be due firstly to pain of physical origin. The causes of this are:

1. The hymen may be tough and incompletely ruptured, or there may be some structural defect of the sex organs.
2. There may be definite inflammation of the internal or external organs of generation.

<sup>1</sup> As Michael Fielding says: "It is possible to accumulate quite a large family while experimenting to find the 'safe period.'"—*Parent-hood: Design or Accident*, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter on Birth Control.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Fielding, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-8, where "the worst cases of nervous breakdown" are attributed to this bad habit.

<sup>4</sup> I am indebted for this section to Dr. Marion Greaves.

<sup>5</sup> A temporary repugnance may exist while a mother is suckling her child. This often passes when the child is weaned.

3. The husband may be inept or impotent.

B. Secondly the reason may be psychological and any of the following may be found.

1. The woman may be ashamed and disgusted to find that intercourse awakens feelings of passion in herself. This, of course, is due to deficiency or absence of sexual education.
2. Definite frigidity or anæsthesia. This is frequently due to some repugnant sexual experience in early life, the memory of which has been repressed.
3. Acquired dislike of sexual expression due to some failure of the husband, in particular too early ejaculation or withdrawal before ejaculation or dislike through the death of love for her husband.
4. There may be memories of a painful first intercourse, causing fear and consequent inhibition.
5. A very frequent cause, particularly in such times of economic stress as the present, is a fear of conception, coupled with ignorance of, or conscientious objection to, the use of any method of birth control other than abstinence.
6. Another cause of failure to respond is due to lack of *sexual* love for the husband. This may be found even in cases where there is real affection and respect. The ignorance amongst girls of the necessity and normality of passionate feelings on their part may tend to the error of mistaking mere friendship and liking on their own part for love, but these, even when deep and genuine, are quite compatible not only with absence of passionate feeling, but with disgust and repulsion for its expression in the partner, whereas another man may, and unfortunately often does, evoke it without effort.
7. In early days the mistake of ignorance of sex or of setting up taboos in regard to it may have been made by parents even of good intention.

Any of these causes may produce a psychological dislike of the act of intercourse, with consequent contraction of

vaginal muscles and physical pain, thus preventing real mutual satisfaction and union. Fortunately the physical causes, and in many cases the psychological causes, are remediable. It is scarcely necessary to add that a marriage fully satisfactory to either side is impossible until the condition is adjusted.

Even people who have made the mistake of marrying for reasons other than love could make life happy if they made a sincere effort to see the best in the person they have married and try to expend sympathy and sacrificial love in order to make harmony out of discord. This will never be an easy task for such people, but it seems the best they can do in the circumstances. Many hold that it is more immoral to continue in a relationship from which love has departed than to break it. But to break it seems to me a grievous wrong to the children of such a marriage. They have the right to both parents and may love both. If so, to thrust a conflict upon them of choosing which side they will take and to deprive them of either is psychologically wounding. And even if there are no children it seems to the writer less than ideal for married folk definitely to separate, because every example of a failure in marriage does something to lower marriage in the eyes of those who know about it and to make some people cynics and other people afraid. "What if life is a cat and dog affair?" says a friend of mine. But must it be so? If one refuses to quarrel, insists on being good-tempered, then that impasse is not reached.<sup>1</sup>

For those who married in love and yet who find their happiness in marriage threatened for some of the reasons I have enumerated, there is always a way out. Every man or woman who marries will realize that he or she has not married a perfect being, that grace and patience, sympathy and understanding, as well as love, will be needed. There is no place where these can be obtained except at the feet of God. I suggest that a good many people ought to go back to the place where they pledged themselves to one another; back to the feet of God.

When I was younger and bolder I used to extract a

<sup>1</sup> See the section on Divorce, pp. 135ff.

promise from every couple that I married. I used to say that I would only marry them on condition that every night they said a prayer together, even if it were only this: "O God, keep us true to one another and to Thee." I have since come to think that it was presumptuous on my part to demand this, but if I were a millionaire I think I would give a wedding present to every couple I married. It should be one of those prie-dieus at which two can kneel together side by side. And I think I would ask them to use it every night, because, obviously, you cannot keep up an estrangement with your wife, you cannot allow things that separate to do any harm, you cannot become selfish and overbearing, you cannot tolerate an interloper, if, night after night, you are praying with her at the feet of God. What God so constantly joins together nothing can put asunder.

I have read somewhere of some poor people in a village who wanted to have a little church of their own. An old woman wanted to contribute something to the church, but she had no money that she could offer, so with great labour she dug up the hearthstone below the kitchen fire and asked that, if suitable, it might help to build the altar of the little church. I have read elsewhere of a bush that burned and was not consumed, and that the only interpretation of this wondrous sight which a man of God could put upon it was that God Himself dwelt in that flame. We used to sing in the army a song which began: "Keep the home fires burning." In the ideal home I see a hearthstone which has become an altar, and the home fires of love are always burning because He who lit them, also sustains them, and their warmth and glow and radiance will never pass away.



## THE QUESTION OF BIRTH CONTROL

*"The technique of birth control dissociates two ideas: the ritual of physical and spiritual communion and the process of reproduction. Its opponents say that its advocates overvalue the former and undervalue the latter. They fail to recognize that, by placing the implement of this dissociation into the hands of husbands and wives, it places with them the responsibility of using that implement with intelligence and discrimination. But such has ever, since the discovery of fire, been the serene, untroubled way of civilization. It has placed in men's hands the sharp-edged knife, the razor, the harnessed powers of steam and electricity, alcohol, gunpowder, fire-arms, radio-activity and now the power of flight. Do not tell us that he will abuse these powers, that he will misuse them to his own destruction. We know that already. He has; he does; he will. But out of his own experience, his own trial and error, his own mistakes, by suffering his own self-inflicted punishments and his own hard-earned rewards, man slowly but certainly advances on the path of civilization. Like every other great instrument of civilization, birth control is making men and women face a new responsibility, and forcing their intelligence to the solution of problems they had for ages deliberately avoided."*—MARGARET SANGER, in *"The Civilizing Force of Birth Control"* (Sex and Civilization).

THE question of birth control, or as it should be more accurately called, conception control, is one which has greatly exercised the minds of many thoughtful men and women during recent years. The aim of this book is to endeavour to help Christian people to solve the questions of sex by looking at them in the light of all the relevant knowledge available, providing a scientifically psychological, and, where necessary, physiological background as accurate as possible, and lifting each problem up into the realm of religion. A point of view is not less, but more religious when it is regarded in the light of science. What has been attempted in other chapters with other problems is our endeavour in regard to this one.

What is birth control? Most married people practise a form of birth control by restricting the number of occasions of intercourse, by choosing times when conception is unlikely, by withdrawal and so on. The term birth control—



and it is convenient to retain it since it has become the popular expression—is now used to indicate the use of various contraceptives by which the act of intercourse can be performed without the probability of subsequent pregnancy. This is achieved by various methods, and those who decide to adopt some such device or number of devices should not do so without studying the subject for themselves far more completely than we are able to discuss it here. The psychological and ethical considerations will be dealt with in this chapter, but I most strongly recommend all married couples who contemplate practising birth control to purchase and read carefully the excellent little manual called *Parenthood: Design or Accident*, by Michael Fielding. It is published by Williams & Norgate, 36 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1 (3s. 6d.). In this little book accurate technical information is given as to the various methods of birth control, and the addresses of firms who supply the contraceptives and the price of the latter are set forth. It also contains a list of the Birth-Control Clinics in the United Kingdom, and is quite the most valuable little book on this aspect of the subject I have met.<sup>1</sup>

The point that an uninstructed use of birth-control devices may be dangerous and that the knowledge contained in such books as the one I have mentioned should be obtained is worth emphasizing. There are traps which beset those who neglect this advice. Incidentally women should not be put off by doctors who discourage them from other than medical reasons. Nor is it to be supposed that most general practitioners know much about the subject. The lay person who reads Michael Fielding's book will know as much about birth-control devices as do most ordinary doctors. Further, many doctors, acting merely from prejudice, dissuade married people from practising birth control when there is no real basis for such dissuasion. However, doctors are now fortunately to be found who know their subject and who can and will do all that is required.

<sup>1</sup> At the same time, those who do not want to read further may obtain sheaths (for male use) or pessaries (for female use) from Frank Turner, 14B Downshire Hill, Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

Having given expression to these warnings we may turn to other aspects of the subject. Many people regard birth control with something akin to abhorrence. They label it as wrong, as unnatural, as promoting immorality among unmarried lovers, as interfering with divine purposes, and so forth. Let us put away mere prejudice and look at the matter as dispassionately as we can.

First of all there are undoubted advantages in scientific birth control. Innumerable women are leading lives spoiled by physical disability and mental anxiety because they have had far too many babies. In some cases the doctor has warned them that they must not have any more children owing to some disease or danger of disease to the genital organs. Yet those who are in the confidence of such women know the kind of arguments that some selfish husbands will bring to bear. They will speak of going elsewhere for their satisfaction. And it is admittedly not easy for a passionate man, without the capacity to achieve much in the way of sublimation, to sleep with a woman and refrain from intercourse. Is it more "right" that she should be physically and mentally worn out with child-bearing than that by a simple device she should safeguard her body from disability and her mind from anxiety? As the Copec Report on the relation of the sexes says (p. 161): "A large number of working-class mothers look to birth control as an effective means of preserving their self-respect and of fulfilling their ideal of parenthood. . . . Ignorance of it is largely responsible for the widespread practice of abortion."

Further, I hold most earnestly that the view that intercourse should never take place unless a child is desired is unfounded and false. It is economically impossible for most married people to have more than three or four children. Are we to suppose that the strongest instinct in our personality is only to be physically expressed during three or four brief periods in a life-time? It may be urged that the economic reasons mentioned are due to an artificial civilization. This is readily admitted. As we pointed out on p. 18 a large number of children was the only wealth among ancient tribes. But an artificial civilization must be met

with artificial correctives. The use of birth-control devices makes it possible for two people, who love each other, to express their love in a physical way as often as they desire without the act being spoilt by a concern lest children will result who cannot adequately be maintained or educated.

Another advantage is that the love of people who are the victims of diseases which can be passed on, can be consummated in marriage when, without birth-control devices, such consummation would be anti-social. I should feel conscientiously unable to marry people either of whom had contracted certain diseases unless I could at the same time recommend them to use some method which would make it unlikely that such dread disease would be passed on, at least as a tendency, to little lives who would not, if they had the power, choose to be born at all. The same applies to unions of those in whose families there is a history of insanity. Again and again one comes across cases of self-immolation and martyrdom. People suffering from hereditary disease rightly feel that they ought not to marry if marriage involves bringing into the world children who may be cursed all their lives and even push the evil curse further still. Quite often, though deeply in love and beloved, they give themselves up to a celibacy which is often the crucifixion of a warm, passionate nature. If it were necessary in the interests of the community, one would have nothing but admiration for such self-sacrifice. Yet although the science of birth control is in its infancy, methods can be employed which make conception highly improbable. To prevent unnecessary suffering and martyrdom surely cannot be labelled "wrong."

Let us turn now to some of the objections raised against birth control. It is condemned by some on the ground that it is "unnatural." So is the use of spectacles. Yet they help many people to achieve an efficiency otherwise impossible. They make for a mastery of the faculty of sight. Why is it more "unnatural" for a person to use a device which helps him to a mastery of sex relationships than to use spectacles? There is something rather ludicrous in a person dressed in two curious tubes of cloth supported by a device of elastic

and leather, wearing a device made of cowhide to protect his feet from wet pavements, wearing a piece of starched linen round his neck, held in place by two small brass devices; wearing two lenses in front of his eyes; wearing a billycock hat on the top of his oiled hair, objecting to another device which may make all the difference between sex harmony and disharmony.

Birth control is condemned by some on the ground that sexual intercourse should never take place unless a child is desired. This principle, which for most of us would limit intercourse to six occasions at most in a lifetime, has been discussed elsewhere (p. 184). In passing, we may see through the inconsistency of those who hold this principle and then have intercourse at what they call the woman's "safe period," always hoping that pregnancy will not take place. This is obviously practising birth control, but in a way more likely to fail. It is curious to find even doctors telling people not to come together unless a child is desired. In my experience this is never a conclusion reached from medical evidence, but from other mere opinions, of no more weight because held by a "doctor" than by any other member of the community. A medical reason is sometimes alleged to bolster up the conclusions reached by prejudice or bigotry.

Birth control is condemned by others on the grounds that it makes for immorality between unmarried people. Is this not the same as arguing that gas stoves should be prohibited since so many people commit suicide by gas-poisoning? Whenever an invention or device is widely known which can bring benefit to thousands, its misuse will always be a possibility. Many speak as though birth-control devices should be kept a state secret and only disclosed to those fit to have the knowledge. As to who decides the fitness of those who should know is not clear. The whole attitude is as impossible as it is mistaken. Once make a thing a secret and it will be speedily known by all those who want to know and have least reason for knowing. This attitude has been taken and as a consequence this result is widespread. Married women, helpless losers in a nightly battle, careworn and exhausted with large families, will be found on the whole to know little

or nothing that is of any use to them about contraceptives. Young unmarried girls of a certain type will be found to know almost all there is to know.

Moreover, the attitude that would keep birth control a secret asks that morality should be established through ignorance of sin. What sort of morality is this? Religion hauls down its flag at once if its only defence against sin is ignorance of safeguards against the results of sin. I believe most intensely that the better way is not to guard a secret which can never be guarded, but to embark on a positive campaign to get men and women to face the problems of sex and adopt a true attitude to it.

Further, though one hates and deplors the present trade in rubber goods as incentives to immorality, if young unmarried people are determined to come together physically—and they will until we can spread higher ideals, implant a nobler conception of marriage and parenthood, and lift the whole question of sex out of the murky light of grimy embarrassments and furtive practice into the only light in which it can be properly faced—is it better that birth-control devices should be used or that women should contract syphilis and gonorrhea, be reduced nearly to lunacy by pregnancies which society regards as shameful—the father meantime going scot-free—and bring into the world children who are unwanted and who almost inevitably suffer a handicap through life in a world into which they did not ask to be born? Morality must be established more positively than this, and show that good is worthy to be followed because it is good, not because the results of evil are to be feared. The argument we have been examining would do away with all treatment of venereal disease on the ground that it is the divinely prescribed result of sin. In the same way those can be found who would prohibit the use of an anæsthetic in a difficult confinement on the ground that pain during childbirth was divinely ordained.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand there is an objection to birth control which does seem to me to have some weight. It is that the use of a device rather spoils the spontaneity of the act of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. iii. 16, etc.

intercourse. It is the ideal if intercourse can take place spontaneously as a physical expression of a deep and tender spiritual affection. Birth-control devices should not be continuously worn as their presence may give rise to various forms of irritation.<sup>1</sup> If before intercourse a man has hurriedly to assume a sheath or a woman a pessary or both; or if a woman has to rise and douche immediately after the act—though a pessary could quite well be left in place till the next morning—and a man remove a sheath, something in spontaneity may be felt to be lost. Moreover, the attention of both parties is liable to be switched away from the spiritual to the physical aspects of the act. Something is lost if there is pre-occupation with the physical. For this reason many husbands and wives—particularly those with many other interests and chances of sublimation—agree to keep to that period of two or three days, which though not “safe” in any certain sense, is a time when conception is less likely to occur. To follow some such plan has the advantages of making a limited “spontaneity” possible. It has the disadvantage of uncertainty and of coinciding with the time when, for the women, sexual desire is frequently at its lowest ebb. Far better, however, in my opinion, to lose the spontaneity in the act than to bring into the world unwanted children whom it will be a strain to bring up and educate. Better still a woman may insert her pessary early in the evening. It would cause her no discomfort. If nothing happens all is well. If, on the other hand, she and her husband are led to the heights, she is ready. In this way a certain spontaneity is preserved. Far better, however, to lose the spontaneity than to impose abstinence when abstinence is a physical and psychological strain which spoils the harmony of the marriage relationship. And, for many, what is lost in spontaneity is more than counterbalanced by the exchange of a greedy, hurried, physical consummation for an æsthetic, prepared ritual which assures the necessary freedom from fear and which contributes to the act a sense of leisure, beauty and satisfaction.

One cannot but pay tribute to the wisdom, sanity and

<sup>1</sup> See *Parenthood: Design or Accident*, Michael Fielding, pp. 64ff.



broadness of mind which characterize the resolution on the subject of birth control passed at the last Lambeth Conference<sup>1</sup> by one hundred and ninety-three votes to sixty-seven. The resolution is quoted below.

"Where there is a clearly felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood, the method must be decided on Christian principles. . . . In cases where there is a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence (which is called the primary and obvious method) the Conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided that this is done in the light of the same Christian principles. The Conference records its strong condemnation of the use of any methods of conception control from motives of selfishness, luxury, or mere convenience."

Parenthood ideally should be a responsible act rather than an accident of physical union. Unless an unusually serious economic position compels, newly-married folk should decide to consummate their love by definitely coming together in the hope and expectation of having a baby. It is not ideal that a marriage should be begun with the use of birth-control devices. On the other hand marriage even in poverty is better than a long engagement which is always a serious psychological strain. And after marriage if even one child would be a serious burden on financial resources it is too much to expect that young ardent lovers should attain complete abstinence and never physically express their love. Nor is such abstinence to be advised. It so often leads to strain, friction, irritability, bad temper. Continence outside marriage is a very different thing from abstinence when, night after night, propinquity stimulates passionate desire which is unexpressed. It is one thing to do without food when in a desert. To be taken to the grill-room where desire is stimulated unbearably and still not be allowed food is a form of torture. Young couples in such circumstances as I have described are to be advised to practise birth control.

Births should ideally be spaced so that the health neither of mother or child suffers. The mother who has barely got over the strain of a previous confinement has no vitality to

<sup>1</sup> 1930.



hand on to another baby. At the same time if finance permits, the gap should not be so great that the children lose the psychological benefits which come from brothers and sisters growing up together and rubbing off each other's corners. We need to remember that "a woman, in giving birth to a child, does no less than a soldier in battle, for she risks her life in the service of the State."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the conclusion may be stated thus. Many Christian teachers feel strongly against birth control, and do not admit that devices should ever be used. The present writer desires to honour their convictions and acknowledge the motives and sincerity of those who believe differently. For himself, however, if due precautions are taken to see that the warnings on p. 79 are heeded—and the value of adequate and capable medical advice can hardly be exaggerated—there is to his mind no prohibitive physical, psychological or spiritual reason why birth-control devices should not be used by married people who feel the need of expressing their love physically and yet who do not desire the birth of children. All that can legitimately be asked from them is that they should lift the whole question on to a high level and make sure that they are not evading a responsibility they ought gladly to accept, denying one another an experience of parenthood which, with all its costs, is a harmonizing and beneficent influence on personality and one of the greatest gifts of God, or denying unnecessarily a child already born a playmate who could save that pathetic soul "an only child" from so much loneliness. The "only child" is so frequently a budding neurotic.

Let me add this paragraph. As love deepens into a marvellous comradeship and fellowship, many married people find that it is less a thing of the body and more a thing of the soul. They find that love's expression varies accordingly. They exercise restraint, but the truest handling of sex life always involves some element of restraint. For them the restraint no longer irks. They do not drift apart. They do not become neurotic. They have no thought of condemning

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Dr. Dearden's excellent book, *The Science of Happiness* (Heinemann), p. 297.

others. There is no loss of romance. Something happens more wonderful than they ever dreamed possible when they first met. Their love, quite gradually, seems to function at a depth of their personalities which they never knew existed. Like the continents and islands of the earth they are united underneath. Still lovers, it is more to them that in the deepest sense, underneath the conscious levels of the mind, they are chums. The physical gradually becomes superseded until there is a deep, serene content. That content seems to them to belong to the world of the spiritual. It is one of the sacraments of life.



A MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO DO NOT MARRY

*"In the districts in which I have worked there have always been at least a few unmarried women who were spending with lavish generosity their whole life force in practical service and sympathy for needy children, harassed mothers, wayward men, and the sufferers of the district in general. No members of the human race are living anywhere with greater effect. No other women are called blessed with greater sincerity. Half a dozen in particular I can think of in this way have done more for the redemption of society in such places than a score of happily married mothers could have accomplished."*—REV. DR. HERBERT GRAY, in *Men, Women and God*.

*"All such (unmarrying women) should endeavour unshrinkingly to bring up into the clear daylight of conscious realization the exact nature of their needs and their desires—at the lowest as well as at the highest level. . . . Self-knowledge of this kind is hard to reach without the help of frank discussion with some wise adviser; but it is the first condition of a redirection and sublimation of unfulfillable desires."*—REV. CANON STREETER, in *Moral Adventure*, p. 130f.

By the title of this chapter I mean to imply, of course, not those who have not yet passed beyond, or even reached the marrying age. I mean those, who, for varying reasons, have parted with the idea of marriage. In this country the majority of such people are women, but it ought not to be forgotten that there are many men who, for various reasons, cannot marry, and I want to say a word, if possible, to help them also. Nor is my message only directed to unmarried men and women, for it is essential that those who call themselves by the Name that is above every name should be able, by sympathy and insight, to understand the problems of the unmarried.

I want the first word to be an appeal for fair play. There are a good many fifth-rate jokes current about "old maids" and bachelors which are not only unkind, unfair and in many cases unchivalrous, but betray a lamentable ignorance of certain facts. Let us look at some of these facts.

Statistics show that the birth proportion of the sexes is 107 boys to 100 girls. Nature's purpose is therefore obvious.

If uninterfered with it would mean that there would not be quite enough women to go round; not quite a wife each. In other words we should have to behave ourselves extremely well to get a wife at all. It is very demoralizing for men that it does not appear to be difficult to find a wife.

Now civilization means a greater male mortality. Boys die in greater numbers in bad conditions. As every mother knows, they are more difficult to rear. But those bad conditions are preventable. In good conditions, experts tell us, boys stand as good a chance as girls. The present disproportion is therefore obviously not part of the God-ordered universe.

Look at the second fact. Men go to the far-flung portions of the Empire exploring, colonizing, and so on, to a far greater extent than women. The fact increases the proportion of women to men.

A great war ravages the whole nation and sweeps away two million young men just at the age when many of them would be thinking of marrying and founding homes. This also is certainly not as God ordered life.

There are facts of a different type which account for many who remain single. I will group them together. They are more intimate facts which we easily forget. Many people are unmarried because, up to the present, the ideal they have set before them has not come within reach and they refuse to be satisfied with the second best. The attainable is not desirable, the desirable is not attainable. A great tragedy is very often locked up in the hearts of unmarried men, it should be remembered, as well as women. Some lover of long ago has passed beyond these voices and no one else will ever fill that vacant place. Or perhaps a great love goes out to someone who does not return the affection. In some cases women have refused marriage because their work seems a loftier thing to live for. All these may, of course, be defence mechanisms. It is probably a sign of psychological abnormality to suppose there is only one lover in the world for one, though most of us have believed this at one time or another, and few would change after years of happy married life have made them grow into one another.

Where people take this view, in most cases, they are rationalizing,<sup>1</sup> either to evade marriage because they fear it, or because no other opportunity comes their way, or else they betray the spoilt child attitude which says, "If I can't have this I won't have anything." They foolishly suppose their sex life is done with, and proceed to repress sex with consequent neurosis. It is surprising to find the number of good women who make up stories of earlier attachments so as to rationalize, to themselves and others, their unmarried condition.

On the other hand celibacy has sometimes a pathological origin. It is common to find a woman who tells a sad tale of a lover lost in the war. I remember a case of a woman who actually wore the engagement ring given to her, as she said, by her beloved. Analysis, however, under hypnosis, revealed the fact that there had never been any such lover. The story and the ring were devices used as "defence mechanisms" by a woman terrified of sex. In the same way some men, especially clergymen, will set up celibacy as an ideal when analysis will clearly show that the ideal is a "defence mechanism" of a person maladjusted or unadjusted to sex, or of a person "afraid of girls," or of one brought up under the terrible old taboos of sex by which sex is thought of as something evil and full of "the temptations of the flesh." Many conscientious young priests fall into this latter category and spend a lifetime trying to repress sex, fighting grim and terrible battles with impure thoughts and lustful mental pictures, attracted by women and yet terrified of the mental torments which follow even the most innocent contacts with them, when all the time, as every psychologist knows, marriage with a healthy-minded girl would lead to a life of harmony, happiness and peace such as the celibate doesn't dream exists. In any case no relief can be found till the motive of the celibacy is unmasked and the frightened spirit driven from his or her defence, or dug-out, into the upper air where there is some

<sup>1</sup> To rationalize is consciously or unconsciously to give an inaccurate reason for behaviour because the true reason is distasteful or will not be faced courageously.

chance of a healthy and normal adjustment to sex being made. There is more celibacy due to the above considerations than those without experience in modern psychological practice would guess.

These facts, then, account for the large numbers of unmarried people which we find in our midst. Some of them are sad facts certainly, but they are not sad primarily because they produce numbers of unmarried people. They are more sad, because of the married people they produce. The stupid idea of the so-called "old maid" has wrought such havoc that it has hurried scores of young girls into ill-considered marriages which turn out unhappily, but which are eagerly entered into in the spirit of "anything but that."

I want to make an appeal not only for chivalry, but for a reasonable facing of facts. Are these women—who are what they are through purely artificial,<sup>1</sup> we might say accidental, circumstances—to be the object of the poor and vulgar jokes and sometimes of the insulting or contemptuous epithet? If we look upon the maimed body of some soldier wounded in the war and still suffering, does it occur to us that the object before us is one for derision and vulgar jest? Then let us remember those who in many cases are victims of that same grim tragedy we call War and who bear their wounds where none can see, in the deep places of a scarred and anguished spirit. Some of the unmarried women in our midst are the very salt of the earth, the lights of the world, the people who are engaged in a score of helpful ministries, particularly to the sick and to little children, particularly in education and in social service, work which married women simply could not do. It is not right that they should be

<sup>1</sup> Namely the artificial convention by which a woman must wait to be asked by a man before she can marry. This again is due to woman's dependence, the cause of so much injustice inflicted on her. The man must keep her. Certain circumstances, however, make the woman's convention-enforced silence a terrible injustice. A man will flirt with her and rouse her and leave her for years, without her knowing whether he is going to propose or not. On the other hand a wealthy woman may be truly loved by a man who holds back because of her money. If she loves him she should be free in this and many other cases to broach the subject herself.

taunted by their own sisters, who, often for no reason for which they need be proud, have become wives.

I want to do more, however, in this chapter than make a mere appeal for chivalry. Let us ask ourselves why it is that the unmarried woman has become the subject almost of contempt—for she is so treated by many young people. The main reason is the old effete conventional theory that the only value of a woman is that she is a potential wife and mother. Unfortunately, though this theory is not openly admitted, it is unconsciously adhered to, and it should be recognized now as a relic of dark and heathen times. If it were not true that this effete idea persists, then there would be no point or sting in the phrase "old maid."

It is just as illogical to think of a woman as being only of value as a potential wife and mother as it is to think of a man as only of value as a potential husband and father, and yet in some of our colonies, where the disproportion of men over women is as great as the reverse with us, you do not find the attitude to the unmarried man which you find here to the unmarried woman. What is the reason? The reason is that it is generally recognized that a man is of service to the community in a multitude of ways unconnected with sex. I claim that it is high time that we recognized that if it is true of men it is also true of women, for we may say definitely that it is unchristian, unfair, and unreasonable to have one law for a man and another for a woman. If you are going to say that a woman's only value is that of a wife and mother, so you must say that a man's only value is that of a husband and father, and if you once allow that how would you assess the life of St. Francis of Assisi, or amongst women, St. Teresa of Spain, or Florence Nightingale, or Mary Slessor?

We have only to look at the question thus to see that though the ideal planned by God was that complete sexual harmony should be reached for every woman in marriage, yet still there is a tremendous sphere for the unmarried woman in which she has no competitors among her married sisters.

Now let me turn more directly to the unmarried. It is



one of the most glorious truths of Christianity that though *we* mismanage life, there is no situation for God's people in which He leaves them without a "way of escape." I do not hesitate to speak of religion here because, as Miss Coster says,<sup>1</sup> "If the sublimation of the analyst bears no direct relation to religion there is a fatal inadequacy about it, for the religious impulse is so deeply implanted in humanity that no theory concerning the human mind and soul can ignore it and hope to live."

Let us look at Jesus for a moment, for He very definitely comes to our help in this problem. He had no repressed instincts. All His instincts functioned in a way which left His whole personality harmonious instead of disruptive. When I spoke of His being wedded to humanity it was not only a figure of speech. That passionate love for humanity did fill part of the gap which was left in His perfect human nature because He was unmarried. His friendship with women filled part of the gap. And when He gathered a little child to Himself, as St. Mark, who had a notable eye for detail, tells us, "putting His arms round it"<sup>2</sup>; when He could not bear that children should be driven away from Him, I see not only the Divine teacher blessing little children and drawing moral lessons from their lovely simplicity, I see also One who was every inch a man, with a nature like ourselves, satisfying the deep hunger of His spirit, a craving—and it cannot be irreverent to say this—which sprang from sex in the widest sense of that word.

The new psychologists, to whom we owe a great deal, have invented a word which is useful in its way. I mean the word "sublimation," remembering that sublimation does *not* mean to make higher, but rather to redirect. Perhaps I can briefly describe its meaning in this way. Imagine the instinct of sex as a stream flowing in a certain channel with great power in order to achieve a certain result, that result being, of course ultimately, the carrying on of the race. If, because of certain facts like those which I have mentioned at the outset, this achievement becomes impossible, we must

<sup>1</sup> *Psycho-Analysis for Normal People*, p. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Mark ix. 36 (Moffatt).

not try to dam up the current, for it will break out somewhere, possibly in an unpleasant way; in unpleasant dreams, lustful imaginings, morbid curiosities, neurotic tendencies and nervous breakdown. Nor must we debase its purpose into unnatural channels—a proceeding which leads to perversion—but sublimate it, that is, divert it into another channel where it can do another piece of work which is of service to the community and satisfying to the self.

If, in a brief illustration of the sublimation of another instinct, your boy takes your gold watch and tries to see how it is made, and stirs the works up with a rusty nail, do not thwart his curiosity by snatching it away. He may attack the dining-room clock next. Do not debase the instinct by giving him something to work on which is not worthy of the instinct. Give him some old broken-down alarm clock and let him try that, so that not only does he learn something of clocks, but the energy of an instinct is used up in a satisfactory way, being not dammed but diverted. The attempt to dam the stream of curiosity, if persisted in, may lead to the morbid curiosity of some adolescents as well as depriving the community of a possible research chemist or explorer, in whose activities the driving-power is, in both cases, sublimated curiosity. In the same way the Boy Scout Movement and the Boys' Brigade are ways in which the herd or social instinct is diverted from its tendency among boys to create miniature "Black Hand" gangs intent on mischief and sometimes on crime, and sublimate it in activity which has a high positive value.

If we put our sex-feelings all in a box deep down in our personality, shut the lid and try to forget there is anything there, we are acting in a way which will lead to trouble. The pent-up energy is as dangerous as boiling water in a kettle, the spout and lid of which have been soldered up. If we do not make an outlet the energy will find its own outlet, even if it causes serious disruption. Sublimation means finding the right channel for the energies of the sex or other instincts.

Let me add four points worthy of our notice. The first is that it is not to be supposed that to look after little

children will be a satisfactory sublimation for the sex energy of every woman. It is cruelly hollow cant to suppose that every unmarried woman can satisfy the maternal urge and sublimate her sex instinct by minding other people's babies. Some will find it of value. To others the advice to look after children will leave them as lonely as the advice to look through a window and watch others enjoying themselves would leave a person whose herd instinct was starved. It just depends which phase of sex activity is most conspicuous in her psychological make-up. If it is the maternal phase, then looking after children will be satisfactory, but if it be some other phase such as self-display, the appropriate sublimation such as music or singing must be made. Since sex is a creative impulse its energy is often most easily sublimated by directing it into creative work, such as making things with the hands, handicraft, music, painting, writing, and so on. The very way in which we speak of a man being *wedded* to his art, and in *love* with his work, of being *passionately* fond of poetry, shows the link between such activity and the sex instinct.

The second point is the supposition that friendship with the same sex is a true sublimation. There is a real danger that this may become the perversion called homosexuality. It is not perversion unless through conversation or physical contacts, either accidental or designed, one or the other becomes sexually excited in the presence of, or in regard to a person of the same sex. The danger is lest the sex impulse be prevented from being naturally directed to members of the opposite sex. As McDougall says, "If bodily expressions of the impulse are indulged in at these times, yielding some satisfaction, the impulse will tend to be confirmed or fixed in such expressions and will continue to seek satisfaction in similar practices." He further adds this warning: "It is probable that every normal human being is in some degree liable to perversion under unfavourable circumstances; such as deprivation of opportunities to experience normal sexual attraction, combined with seductive influences exercised designedly or unwittingly by members of the same sex."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Outline of Abnormal Psychology*, pp. 322, 323.

Why is such perversion wrong? I think the answer is two-fold. (1) A perversion inhibits the true direction of the sex impulse, whereas a true sublimation does not do this. (2) It induces the same perversion in the victim. There are people who are innate homosexuals. They "assert their right to do as their nature dictates to them and cannot be made to feel that there is in such practices anything unnatural or repulsive. They have no guilt or self-reproach." A person with an *acquired* perversion can generally see that it is wrong and commonly desires a return to normality. The matter need not be fully considered here since it is discussed in chapter VIII, but the point is worth making because such friendships are not uncommon and frequently—accompanied with physical sex practices—they descend to the level of perversion with evil consequences for both.

A third point is the fear among some that sublimation will destroy the instinct, the energy of which is sublimated. This is impossible. It may be confidently stated that should circumstances make the biological channel available in later years the energy from an instinct will quickly flow in its more natural bed. In this fact one sees another useful and important distinction between sublimation and perversion. I have never seen a case in which a person found it difficult, after sublimating the sex instinct in various ways, to redirect the sex energy into the normal biological channels. This effort in my experience is always successful, and some very happy marriages result from it. On the other hand I have had cases where it has been most difficult for a person who has indulged in a sex-perversion over a long period to find sexual satisfaction in marriage and parenthood. The act of intercourse fails to give either joy or satisfaction, and frequently the perverted practices are resumed after marriage wherever circumstances make them possible.

The fourth point is that sublimation is in a sense a second best, and except in people of exceptionally high character it is not easy to make the sublimation so complete as to use up all the instinctive energy which needs directing. In the case of Jesus we must suppose that being unmarried and yet a perfect man, He made a complete sublimation of His

energies, but for most of His followers it is a second-best to the biological way of using sex energy, and complete sublimation is a discipline which may take years to accomplish. At the same time, *it is the only way out which can produce happiness and complete harmony of being*, and in my view it is God's message to the unmarried.

A word must be added here on the difficulty of sublimation for *sexually awakened* women who cannot find satisfaction in marriage. The average girl is sexually unawakened fully until the sex instinct is stimulated by courtship, more particularly by any form of touching, either by kissing or by even more intimate and exciting methods of handling. It should therefore be easy to realize how callous and cruel it is for any man to arouse sex feelings unless he intends to satisfy them normally by marriage. If he does not do this the girl faces an acute problem in sex mastery. Either she satisfies the awakened instinct in any way that offers—and it is rare to find a sexually awakened girl who, if unable to marry, does not comparatively soon become a victim of the habit of self-abuse—or else she is left with the problem of sublimation made so difficult that she is inclined to be cynical at the use of the word and give up all effort. Sublimation is difficult enough for the unawakened girl who has to realize that although she may not be fully conscious of them she has the sexual desires common to humanity. But for the woman who realizes, on the one hand, all too clearly what she needs and craves for, and on the other hand, the cruel impossibility of obtaining satisfaction, it may be a problem almost too great for her strength, and her sufferings are intense. A few days ago I interviewed a girl of exceedingly high character, and a member of a distinguished profession, who trembles if a man comes into the room, and who three times has changed her lodgings because men-lodgers have occupied other rooms. Her sex nature is a perpetual torment to her. At certain times (see p. 17) storms of desire sweep through her which almost drive her to the streets. At others she is afraid of insanity or suicide. “I think I am all sex,” she said to me, “my only hope is a convent.” Of course a convent is the last place for her. She

would take her fantasy-making mind with her. Gradual readjustment to sex by psychological methods will help her, and the normal society of good men will eventually benefit rather than terrify her. But I write down these sentences in regard to her because if men knew to what torture they condemned a highly-sexed girl by kisses and intimate touches which awaken but do not satisfy an instinctive hunger, they might not be so cruel and heartless.

A good deal of discussion has taken place as to whether sublimation is a conscious or unconscious process. In many people sublimation is going on without the person concerned knowing it. It is probably best to reserve the word sublimation for that redirection of instinctive tendencies when such redirection—which may or may not be consciously begun—is completed; in other words, when it becomes unconscious.

. So a propagandist may redirect his instinct for self-display in his propagandism and find harmony in such redirection. Or one may have a propagandist quite unconscious that the instinct of self-display plays any part in his work. I should say that the best sublimation is that which, if it begins by conscious redirection of the instinctive tendencies, sinks into the unconscious so that conscious redirection becomes unconscious redirection or true sublimation, though most writers use the word for both the conscious and unconscious redirection.

If, however, we are dealing with young people at adolescence who show no symptoms of disharmony, it may be best to direct them to a certain course of conduct so that they truly sublimate, that is, their instinctive energies are unconsciously redirected to an end without *the process* necessarily having conscious recognition. In this way an adolescent is helped to become interested in the social end through which instinctive tendencies become expressed without the conscious presence of those tendencies becoming the motive of the redirection, a motive which may fix attention on itself with morbid results. This method, successful with adolescents, is not, in my experience, successful with adults whose adjustment is a far more serious problem and who show



symptoms of disharmony. With them there should be a conscious and fearless facing up to the facts underneath the problem. They must be shown—sometimes relentlessly—what are the forces within themselves that have led them to the impasse in which they find themselves. They must be encouraged to accept themselves as they are, however revolting they may at first appear to themselves to be. Pretence, convention, hypocrisy, conscious, or, up to the present, unconscious, must be put away. When they accept themselves as they are and not as they would like to think of themselves as being, or have others think them to be, then they can turn the very stream that was bearing them over the falls toward disaster into a channel by the power of which dynamos can be driven and an electric current generated which will mean power, light and usefulness both to themselves and to the world. "The history of Christianity proves that multitudes of men and women have lived full and rich lives although they have renounced or been debarred from all sexual experience. They have found a vision and a purpose in life large enough to satisfy the whole of their instincts in the service of God and of their fellows."<sup>1</sup>

So we must leave the matter. Some women will feel a little bitter about the problem. The world can be very hard and very cruel to women of warm heart and broad sympathy and deep nature, who, as wives and mothers, would have so rich a gift to give to the community. Perforce they must withhold their gift and apparently the community does not care. The world goes on in its careless, unheeding way, and for so many of its sins and ignorances, its prejudices and mistakes, the woman pays. To add insult to injury the world only too often passes by its very victims with a laugh, a jest, a sneer.

Let me quote in conclusion some words of Dr. Herbert Gray about unmarried women. "The world can never make good to them the wrong it has done them; yet they may, if they will, put the world inexpressibly in their debt. No doubt mankind does not deserve it, but the one perfect.

<sup>1</sup> *Relation of the Sexes*, Copec Commission Report, vol. iv, p. 70.



lover in history was willing to die for an undeserving world." The sacrifice of a woman ready to bear a child and deprived by a fact like the fact of war, is, when that sacrifice is made in the Christ-spirit, a source of moral power which runs through society. No endeavour in all life can ever be so splendid as to follow quietly, humbly, devotedly in that pathway where His feet have trodden out the way.

## THE MISHANDLED SEX LIFE

*"No man or woman attains to fullness and harmony of life if the sexual nature be either neglected or mismanaged."*—  
DR. A. HERBERT GRAY.

I BELIEVE it is true to say that, in modern life, any practising psychologist—whether with the background of a medical or a ministerial training added to his training and experience in psychology—who interviews any ten people, finds that the disabilities and disharmonies of eight of them have their origin in a sex life which is being mishandled. It is not often that such mishandling is altogether the fault of the patient. It is due to a wrong psychological attitude to sex. And this again may be due to the patient having been brought up in entire ignorance of sex, having picked up in doubtful ways a kind of half-knowledge about sex, having suffered, as far back as childhood's days, some sexual adventure, unveiling or shock, or having been, to his great misfortune, born with a tendency to sex perversion. It is the purpose of this chapter to help such people to make a true adjustment to sex and to escape from the tyranny of habits for which, with or without reason, they hate themselves. The commonest forms of perversion are therefore dealt with. The list is not complete, but forms of perversion outside the list of those discussed are not often met with. I have personally treated cases in both men and women of all those mentioned, and the mental distress of some sufferers seems to make some broad lines of treatment worth writing down.

## MASTURBATION OR SELF-ABUSE

This term signifies the touching, handling or rubbing of the organs of generation or genital apparatus in order to evoke pleasurable feelings and satisfy sexual desires. It is a practice which is so common that probably almost all men at some time or another in their development are brought to face it. The practice is not so common in women, but probably 80 per cent of women at some time or other

have derived sexual pleasure from digital manipulation of the genital area.<sup>1</sup> To thousands of men and women it is the biggest personal problem of their lives. Some achieve complete mastery, some have periodic outbreaks when they practise the habit, some by iron exertions of will "succeed" in repressing sex only to break down in neurosis, while some simply accept defeat and for twenty years of their life practise a habit which has complete sway over them. For this, some reproach themselves, while others conclude that it "does not matter." Quite recently I have had the joy of curing—apparently completely—a boy who masturbated several times a day for eight years and a girl in whom the practice had been a daily one for nearly fifteen years. The former writes: "I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently. I write to say that I am now my own master." The latter writes: "I can never cease to thank God for all that that visit to Leeds saved me from . . . I am finding that your methods work. My health has righted itself and there is no sign of nervous breakdown."

Let us ask what the way out is. In olden days—not so very olden either—this practice was painted as the blackest of all possible sins. Anyone who practised it was pretty sure of hell. Our grandfathers, including our medical grandfathers, if they did not avoid all reference to it, taught that

<sup>1</sup> Figures vary. In *The Causes and Treatment of Masturbation*, a threepenny pamphlet by Dr. P. F. Barton and the Rev. Dr. Herbert Gray, it is said to be more common in adult women than in men, though not so common in girls as in boys. Another psychologist says that 99 per cent of those who have given him their confidence practise it, and he suspects the hundredth of concealing the truth. Another's figure is 95 per cent of both sexes. Another got definite figures by enquiry and the result showed 97 per cent women who had practised the habit at some time or other. My own experience would go to show the percentage much lower, both in men and women, but much higher than most people imagine. I should say in very young children it is commoner in girls; from ten to sixteen, commoner in boys; in adolescence, as common in girls, who are very prone to it just before and after the period; and in later years, commoner in men. Women who have been sexually awakened and then debarred from marriage are greatly worried by it. "Without the aid of religion," writes a woman correspondent, "it would be quite impossible for a woman who has been sexually stimulated to keep straight. I wish there were some means of telling women and girls who have been through it that there is a way out."

it was not only a dreadful sin, but that also it had physical and mental consequences which were terrible; these consequences being regarded as the just punishment of God for human wickedness. It was said that the victim of this habit invariably brought disease upon himself and that if he did not speedily check it he would go mad. Asylums were said to be full of people brought there by this cause alone. One youth asked me if it were true that the substance of the brain ran down the spinal column and escaped with the seminal fluid. Another was quite sure that masturbation made marriage immoral because it rendered its victims impotent. The only hope of cure held out was said to lie in the exercise of the victim's will assisted by the religious exercises of prayer and Bible reading. No wonder then that of all the troubles brought to the understanding minister or doctor this is the one which is still most productive of misery, depression and despair.

Fortunately most of what was held to be true in regard to masturbation, physically, psychologically and theologically, we now know to be vulgar nonsense. Physically let us put people's minds at rest at once by saying that the effects of it are negligible. A person may masturbate daily for twenty years and suffer no more physical disability than a slight and temporary devitalization.<sup>1</sup> No longer must people be frightened by bogey stories of physical disease or theological penalties. Such warnings have driven ignorant people of both sexes into unthinkable terror and dread. Psychologically the results are more serious. Masturbation in the adult is nearly always due to a maladjustment to sex and its continuance maintains such maladjustment. It is a serious matter to be maladjusted to so important a thing as sex, but no results serious enough to cause alarm ever result from masturbation itself. What has so often happened is that the practice has been so surrounded by feelings of guilt, shame, inferiority, self-loathing, horror and, above all, fear,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Forel, *The Sexual Question*, English translation by Marshall (Heinemann), p. 229. Six medical authorities I consulted agree here. I have been asked by young married women whether masturbation in girlhood prevents pregnancy after marriage. It can confidently be said that there is no reason whatever for supposing that this is the case.

that all sorts of pathological mental conditions have resulted, not from the habit, but from the false emotions with which it has been surrounded; emotions, it must be added, the intensity of which are out of all proportion to the seriousness of the habit. In the main, of course, this intensity derives partly from the Victorian taboo on the discussion of sex problems, so that this particular problem is a secret problem having about it that rank exaggerated growth which is associated in our minds with things that grow in the dark. Partly also for reasons discussed on p. 8 (Preface), any sexual shortcoming is regarded as the worst possible type of "sin."

This brings us to the point where we may discuss whether masturbation is to be regarded as a "sin" or as a mistake.

Having thought the matter over for years and read as fully as possible the literature bearing on the subject, and having discussed the matter with many friends, medical, ecclesiastical and lay, I give it as my opinion that the act *in itself* is neither moral nor immoral. It is the non-biological use of a part of the body for the purpose of obtaining enjoyment. So is smoking. And viewed *as detached acts* the one is no more "wicked" than the other.

I am quite sure that, for many people, masturbation takes the bloom from a holy thing, namely subsequent sexual intercourse with a beloved person. This, for many people, differentiates it at once and makes it a thing "not done." But some people hold strong views about smoking. I agree that masturbation may spoil the sacredness of the sexual relationship, but I do not think we have any right *on that ground* to label it as a sin when it is viewed as a detached act. A woman, who has shut her mind against the thought of marriage, tells me that, for her, there is no mental picture accompanying the act. On the other hand she says that it does deflect her mind from racking pain which she often has to bear. This may be unsound because it does nothing to ease her pain, gives her a false comfort, and uses up energy which she needs with which to combat the pain, but it is not to be called sinful.

But masturbation is so rarely unaccompanied by mental

pictures which the imagination conjures up that it can hardly be regarded as a detached act. And to my view whether the practice is "sinful" or not depends *not on the imaginative pictures which accompany it, but on the way in which we deal with them.* The pictures themselves rise, at times, to every mind. They are bound to do so when one remembers the strength of the instinct of sex and the little chance of using it all in normal life. It shows neither wickedness nor holiness that the thoughts should come. They come from the depths of the unconscious mind. The point is what the conscious mind does with them when they do come. We cannot help the callers who come to the doorstep and even ring the bell. We *can* help saying, "Come into the living-room and make yourselves at home." Masturbation becomes sin when such thoughts are *deliberately entertained.* Self-control is being undermined. Sex adjustment is made more difficult.

What makes masturbation sinful, then, in my opinion, is not the act itself, but the conscious welcoming of imaginative pictures conjured up by the mind which accompany the act and produce the first stirrings of sex excitement. I recently had the case of a young man who practised masturbation some five or six times a day. On every occasion the act was accompanied by the working out of an imaginative scene in which he took a lustful part. One woman psychologist says that many adolescents have made up a kind of continuous story containing incidents which are lascivious and lustful only because the mind is imaginatively giving its consent to immoral acts. These demoralizing and unprofitable incidents are added to daily and entered into through the help of the imagination. "This," she says, "is much more common among girls and young women than among boys and young men; among 352 persons of both sexes, 47 per cent among women and only 14 per cent of men have any continued story."<sup>1</sup> Surely this is the sin which Jesus condemned when He said that looking on a woman with intent to seduce her was a way of committing adultery,<sup>2</sup> even

<sup>1</sup> Havelock Ellis, *Psychology of Sex*, vol. ii, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> See *Psychology in Service of the Soul*, p. 176.



though the "looking" is imaginative. Women also whom I have tried to help in this matter have almost without exception related that the desire to masturbate is accompanied by sexual mind-pictures imaginatively dwelt upon.

The danger is, of course, that sometimes a mind-picture actualizes, or is dwelt on for so long that its actualization is definitely sought. Then it is found that self-control has gone. The personality has so often consented to evil in the realm of the imagination that if ever the person concerned finds himself in actual circumstances similar to those of his fantasy he gives way at once. It cannot be other than sin for the personality to assent to sin even in the imagination, especially when by so doing some future battle in real life is being turned thereby from possible victory into almost inevitable defeat. If masturbation is practised without this mental concomitant then its "sinfulness" is surely obliterated, and for highly sexed men and women in whom sexual tension becomes unbearable, rather than fall into sin with another person it is better to masturbate and be done with it; either blanking the mind meanwhile, or letting the mind picture only the husband or wife with whom intercourse would be legitimate. Separated lovers with vivid imaginations would find this practice more satisfactory than to maintain the tension, flog the will, say many prayers, but be unable to get mind or body away from the sense of sex-hunger, and perhaps to fall a prey to the temptation to find relief and satisfaction in some "sinful" because anti-social way. I cannot condemn the lonely man (or woman) separated from wife (or husband) who, by allowing himself a monthly lonely orgasm, finds that he can dismiss thoughts of sex and lead a happy life, when the alternative for him would be constant craving and torture with, perhaps, unfaithfulness and life-long regret in the face of sudden temptation and opportunity. But notice a vicious circle. To accomplish masturbation a man conjures up mental pictures. Then he finds that he has a hankering after doubtful literature, art and pornography, capable of helping him make further mental pictures, which because they increase the sex secretions again induce him to masturbation. At



the same time it should be recognized that sexual fantasies may often arise from a non-moral unconsciousness. It is not a sign of an evil mind that they do so arise. Unless there is repression they will at times arise in every mind. The important point is how they are dealt with by a morally educated consciousness. We must not condemn as sinful or impure or lewd, thoughts that rise from the depths of the mind. Other considerations can be made to operate and prevent acts being carried out even though thought about. When people begin to reproach themselves for "evil thoughts" instead of being concerned with what they do with such thoughts, neurosis, however slight, arises.

A very serious result of such fantasies, especially in the case of women, is that the latter have, on occasion, asserted the actual happening of events either only dreamt about or conjured up by the imagination. In the case of a neurotic woman it is not uncommon for her to assert that things have happened which have no real basis in fact. There are many cases in the literature of the subject in which sexual dreams have been so vivid as to make the subject think and talk of them as actual happenings. Thus, for instance, in Australia, a man was charged with rape and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment on the accusation of a girl of thirteen who subsequently confessed that the charge was imaginary. The jury were misled because the girl narrated the incident of the alleged event with such detail.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, to return to lovers or young married people who are separated, I have been asked by a correspondent if, in such a case, there can be any sin in the habit carried out with the mind concentrated on the beloved person. "It is only going through a kind of mental love-making," says my friend, "no more 'sinful' than physical embraces." The answer, I think, is that mental love-making on the part of separated lovers is certainly legitimate even if it leads to physical sex-excitement, but if such love-making becomes masturbation, deliberate physical manipulation of the sex zones of the body, then I think it may be found that the act of intercourse and all physical embraces may after-

<sup>1</sup> Havelock Ellis, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 151.

wards be found by *fastidious* lovers to have lost something of their "bloom." The reunion of parted lovers will be all the richer, I think, if both have kept themselves in such a way, mentally and physically, that the loveliness of reunion is not marred by a sense of a holy relationship somewhat lessened by the self-reproach that so often follows masturbation.<sup>1</sup> Further, although no claim could be established that the practice is sinful it is nevertheless a form of fantasy, and if a fantasy be constantly indulged in, then to face up to reality becomes a harder task. Reality is less bearable and the energy with which to face it has been frittered away in fantasy-indulgence. There is a line, a fine line I admit, between legitimate mental love-making and a physical manipulation that may end in *some* loss of self-respect.

At the same time it should always be remembered by separated lovers that there is nothing unclean in the desire, hungry, physical and passionate, which at times will rush upon them, or in the mental recreation of some past occasion of "loving" which then was utterly unashamed and glad.

Having said this I do find that in practice a person who seeks help with this particular problem has nearly always a tremendously exaggerated sense of guilt. He thinks of masturbation as the sin of sins, often refers to it as "the unpardonable sin" and feels that it makes him an outcast from God. Nearly every time I meet this problem I find the first necessary thing to do is to rob the situation of these *abnormal* feelings of guilt and fear. After all, masturbation with fantasy cannot be worse in the sight of God than, say, to lose one's temper. Indeed it may not be nearly as bad, since a loss of temper always influences another—though it does not do him as much harm as it does the loser—and masturbation is a loss of self-control which only immediately influences the loser. Moreover, masturbation is the misdirection of an instinctive energy. I do not believe that any instinctive misdirection physically expressed in a way which

<sup>1</sup>A self-reproach that follows even in the case of those who defend the practice. If such self-reproach depresses the spirit there is not much comfort in arguing to oneself that it has no basis in reason. Even if it has its basis in taboos centuries old it is *there*.

only harms the person who does it, can be so bad in the sight of Heaven as a sin of the spirit such as spiritual pride. I find such deep misery and self-reproach shown by masturbators that I would definitely get them to cease to exaggerate the sinful aspect of the practice by pointing out that in all probability it is not nearly so bad as, say, turning a person out of your pew on a Sunday evening, or being a spiritual Pharisee or hypocrite. "A church-going, soured, spinster lady," says Mr. Kenneth Ingram,<sup>1</sup> "probably has no conception that her acts of snobbishness, her social cruelty, her uncharitable thoughts towards those who do not go to church may be offences much more damnable than any carnal desires from which she is entirely free," though it may be added that to be "dreadfully shocked" by sex scandals is a form of mental sex-gratification. Jesus never condemned what are too glibly called the sexual "sins" so severely as He condemned sins against love or truth.<sup>2</sup>

I want now to turn to the cure of masturbation and to set out certain directions which, if followed conscientiously, will almost certainly result in cure. Many people are shy of approaching anyone, be he doctor or minister, about such a problem. They have grown hopeless about it and are in despair. Let them take heart. The directions which follow have been the means of curing permanently a great number of cases in both sexes, some of them of many years standing, and the six medical men and women who have all read this chapter have expressed their complete approval of the suggestions made. For the sake of clearness I will set them forth under three headings, psychological, religious and physical, and I will adopt the direct form of address. Let no one give up until he has for at least twelve months followed the directions here laid down,<sup>3</sup> in the compiling

<sup>1</sup> *The Modern Attitude to Sex*, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple: "To choose your career for selfish reasons is a worse sin than, let us say, committing adultery, for it is the withdrawal of the greater part of your time and energy from the service of God."—*Christian Faith and Life*, p. 37 (Student Christian Movement Press). And in the same strain at the Leeds Social Purity Conference, March 16th, 1931.

<sup>3</sup> If the cause of the masturbation be in the unconscious, of course these methods will not avail until by technical psychological treatment the cause has been lifted into consciousness.

of which I have myself got much help from both doctor and minister friends and from a long experience of helping young people in this matter. A special paragraph will follow dealing specifically with masturbation in children.

#### A. *Psychological*

1. Granted that you do honestly and sincerely want to be free from the habit, realize, in the first place, that you, like everyone else, have a sex instinct. Do not turn away from it as if it were unclean. God Himself implanted it in human nature. It is the spring of all the creative activity of the human personality, though for reasons set forth on p. 18 we have large quantities of sex energy on our hands. Realize and accept yourself as possessing sex-hunger, and furthermore realize that it is no more sinful to be conscious of sex-desire than it is to be conscious of hunger at dinner-time. To *desire* sex-experience is not more "wrong" than to desire food.

2. Now ask yourself what your history has been from the point of view of sex. Probably you have been brought up to think of sex as unclean, as a subject not discussed, and your sex-nature has therefore not developed properly. It has been arrested or misdirected at too early a stage. If you had had all your questions answered as they arose in your mind you would not have come to regard sex as a furtive and rather grimy secret, and its desires as illegitimate and wrong. You would have understood yourself at each successive stage of development and have come to take as normal an attitude to sex as you do to your social and personal ambitions. You may truly regard your masturbation as being in the same category with other symptoms of arrested development such as is sometimes seen in a child of three or four who still sucks a dummy. The habit is a kind of compensation for an inability to express personality in a normal way in the modern world. It is for this reason that masturbation is often commoner among shy men and girls than in the more aggressive. Unable to express themselves outwardly in a way that draws admiration, they retreat within themselves and find in masturbation what a baby

finds in its dummy when it is denied that for which it cried, a comfort and consolation wholly self-centred and bounded by the physical. When, for example, you see a picture or a poster which excites you sexually, do not pretend you are *not* excited. Rather say to yourself, "Yes, I know that excites my physical self which has not yet grown up past the childish stage: but my true ego *has* passed beyond that stage and I prefer a better adult expression than this habit provides."

3. You will find yourself making progress when you realize that masturbation is the misuse on selfish levels of an instinctive energy; the turning in on itself of an energy the true goal of which is creative in an altruistic sense; not creative only in procreation, but as the dynamic of art, poetry, religion, handicraft, almost anything that is worth doing and which adds things beautiful and useful to the wealth of the world.

4. You will probably know that if you are in danger of losing your temper, there are two suggestions worth remembering. One is that to stop and ask, "Why do I want to punch the fellow's nose?" will inevitably make you not want to do it. To examine and contemplate an emotion is a certain way of cooling it. Why then do you want to masturbate? "To relieve sex tension," you will say, or "to indulge in a bit of imaginative fantasy," or "because I cannot help it." A very probable reason which may not have occurred to you is that the impulse arises mainly from the fact that at some point your egoistic desires have been thwarted. To evade this thwarted feeling and the sense of inferiority thus engendered, emotions and impulses prompt us to self-love, and masturbation is a typical way of gratifying self-love. Indeed erotic self-gratification is a synonym for masturbation. This is what the psychologist means when he talks of masturbation as narcissistic. Narcissus was a young Greek, so the story runs, who, gazing into a pool, saw his own image and fell in love with it. Narcissism has come to be a psychological term which means a self-love which has become morbid. Even when the impulse to masturbate is sexual, its real cause is generally narcissistic, and

until this is *realized*, not merely known,<sup>1</sup> the sex instinct does not emotionally develop to adult expression but remains a way of satisfying an undeveloped, infantile self-love. When this is realized and adult expression is *desired* a cure is in sight. Look therefore for your hidden, thwarted, egoistic desires. Examine your lack of success, your self-pities, disappointed hopes, and so forth, being always mentally honest in the matter. Honesty is the first requirement for the necessary understanding of yourself. Also you know that, to put it at its lowest, masturbation is not worth it. The passion to commit self-abuse is like desire for a beautiful soap bubble; as desirable as could be. Yet experience has already taught you that to grasp a soap bubble is only to find an ugly wet patch in your hand and to call yourself a fool. You know that after the masturbation you often hate yourself, call yourself a fool, or worse, and feel miserable for days. Deliberately to say this over to yourself when desires arise will help.

Having done this, and recognizing yourself as a sexually hungry person, switch the mind at once on to another interest, not by lying in bed saying, "I will not have these hateful thoughts," but by some *action* which switches the mind on to other things. If it is day-time at once get up from your chair and get into the presence of other people and talk to them. If you are in bed before sleeping, sit up in bed, write a letter, do your nails, read a novel. *Do* something to switch the mind on to other things. If it is early morning, either follow the same advice or get up and have a cold bath, unless to do so would be to begin in the depth of winter or be of danger to the health. You will not so deeply hate yourself, if at first you lose sleep, as you will if you cannot overcome the habit. This will not lead to repression if you say meanwhile, "I know I have this instinct, but I refuse to express it in a way which robs me of my self-respect."

5. Many people are cursed with the desire to masturbate

<sup>1</sup> It is one thing to know a fact, another to realize it fully. It is one thing to know that you are forgiven a sin by God, but what a different, liberating experience it is to *realize* the fact of forgiveness.



as soon as they wake, but before they are really aroused. They probably never realized a psychological truth which is of the greatest value to mathematicians and incidentally to preachers. It is that by practice it is possible to arrange what your thoughts shall be on waking. If a thought—or mathematical or theological problem is given to the mind the last thing before sleeping—not the last thing but one—it seems as if the mind chews over the problem in the unconscious mental life which we call sleep. If the mind then be given some asexual idea or problem or thought, it will, in time, be the first waking thought the next morning. I have myself found this work in a wonderful way. For some nights recently, when I wanted to wake in a fit mood to write a former book,<sup>1</sup> I repeated to myself, last thing at night, the sentence, "Where He touches there is healing, where He beckons there the light shines, where He dwelleth there is peace." On the following morning the words were the first thing of which my conscious mind was aware. But more of this under the section on the religious aspect of cure.

6. I want to add a sentence or two on the value of hypnosis. In very severe cases I have had great success with this method. In one, the case of a girl, who had been in the habit of practising masturbation five or six times a day for several years and who was in utter despair, I only had the opportunity—since she lived so far away and could not get time off—of trying hypnotic suggestion three times. Nevertheless she forthwith went for over twelve months without a single lapse, and seems now completely cured. In other stubborn cases hypnosis has been beneficial. In the case of a young man deeply addicted to it one treatment brought a power of resistance which meant immunity for several months. I think, however, that hypnosis should, wherever practicable, only be used in conjunction with methods which track the matter to its cause and open up its origins, and it should only be practised by a skilled and experienced psychologist who does not cure only the practice of masturbation, but who cures *the desire to masturbate*.

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus and Ourselves*.



### B. Religious

1. In writing under this heading it is noteworthy that sexual temptation has so often been the temptation of some of the greatest saints.<sup>1</sup> A number of great preachers have been made very miserable by it. Sex and religion are very close together. Some of the earliest religious rites were definitely sexual in character and in Hinduism some still are. One notes the sexual origin of some religious manias, and the fact that great evangelists, strong in character in other respects, have fallen to sex temptation is not without significance. It may well be that sex temptation is an indication of at least a possibility of rising to great spiritual heights.

A gifted young man in London confided to me years ago that his great ambition was to be a minister, and he felt called to make that his life's work, but masturbation was the curse of his life and he felt obliged for this reason to relinquish all thought of the ministry. I felt compelled to tell him that the fact that this was his temptation—sex and religion being so inter-related—was to me good evidence that when it was overcome he would make a fine minister. The work of the ministry demands so much creative activity of the personality that it is a good sublimation of the sex instinct. So this young man found it. He has conquered the habit, has sublimated in his duties the sex instinct which, turned in on itself, led to masturbation, and is doing very well indeed. I was criticized for this opinion. If the young man's temptation had been bad temper it would never have been held serious enough to exclude him from the ministry. Yet which is worse, a habit that makes miser-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. St. Jerome: "How often when I was living in the desert, which affords to hermits a savage dwelling-place . . . did I fancy myself amid the pleasures of Rome! I, who from the fear of hell had consigned myself to that prison where scorpions and wild beasts were my companions, fancied myself among bebies of young girls. My face was pale and my frame chilled from fasting, yet my mind was burning with the cravings of desire, and the fires of lust flared up from my flesh." Note the uselessness of the monastery or convent for such a condition, or of "taking a holiday" for any condition which is plaguing the mind.

Cf. also the erotic nature of the writings of some women saints, e.g., St. Teresa of Jesus, "Ah, how sweet is the first kiss of Jesus!" etc.; cf. also Tennyson, "St. Agnes Eve."

able only the one who indulges in it, or a habit that makes miserable all those on whom it is vented? Let us take to heart the fact that masturbation is not a very dreadful and deadly sin; that, apart from the gloating over lascivious pictures in the mind which accompanies it, it is doubtful whether it can be called sin at all; and that almost every man and woman at some point in life has had to contend with it; that yours is not a lonely worry, but the daily problem of thousands.

2. Dissociate from it in your mind the abnormal feelings of guilt which you have in regard to it. Realize to what a great extent those feelings are due to a false but tenacious idea in human thinking for hundreds of years, that sex and all thoughts and feelings connected with it are unclean.

3. Stop thinking of dealing with it as a great "battle." Think of it rather as a mistaken habit which you are dispassionately viewing and deciding to replace by better habits, and do not be depressed by occasional failure.

4. You have heard often of "the expulsive power of a new affection." Realize that old ideas and habits, even if both are obsessive, are best met, not by acts of will following abject self-loathing and despair, but by the inflow of new ideas and new habits.

5. Be careful how you pray about this matter. It is possible for prayer to be retrogressive and to lead you back instead of forward. Many people in praying call to mind the times they have failed, call up the spectres of past disaster, and then in one sentence say, "Help me to do better." The result on the mind is a far more powerful impression of past failure than of future success. The mind must no longer be turned on to the failure of the past, but to the heights of the future. Rather thank God that by His grace you are now becoming the captain of your soul, the master of your own life. *Never* refer to the actual habit in prayer. Do not pray "Forgive this my secret sin," or, "Deliver me from this unclean habit." Much less give it a name. This pushes the thought of it even more deeply into the mind. Rather be positive and turn to the future deliverance. "I

thank Thee that I am becoming freed from all that spoils my communion with Thee or hinders the development of my mind and spirit."

6. Simply soak the mind with thoughts of Christ. Let the last bit of reading you do at night be from the New Testament or from books about Him. Let there be positive and unmorbid prayers to Him and let the last conscious thoughts be some simple ascription such as the following: "O God forgive whatever has been unworthy this day in thought and word and deed. If I have wronged another show me how best to put that wrong right. Then let me put my sins behind my back and be no longer held down by the memory of what is past, as Thou in Thy mercy dost put them behind Thy back, remembering them against me no more for ever. During this night do Thou remain close to me. Give to Thy beloved in sleep and during the silent watches, in the deepest places of my mind fill me with Thyself. Then shall I awake in Thy likeness, radiant and pure, serene and strong, ready for anything the new day can bring, able to kindle in others the life Thou hast kindled in me, strong in all things to do Thy will. Into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Amen."

It is a good thing also to have in the mind some picture, say the face of Christ as He blessed little children, or the face of Christ as portrayed in some great work of art, the face smiling and radiant rather than sad, anguished and crowned with thorns. Train the mind, when it wants to picture sex fantasies, to switch over to this new picture. A friend of mine who did this found that it worked so well that the sacred mind-picture was thrown on to the mental screen when enervating sexual thoughts arose, almost in an automatic way. It seemed to him to be a warning that his mind was wandering in dangerous places. This is not evading sex in a manner capable of producing repression. It is choosing the thoughts on which the mind desires to dwell; not choosing them because all sex thoughts and desires are wrong, but because sex thoughts of a certain kind lead to sex fantasies and gloating over fantasies leads to lack of self-control.

### C. Physical

I did not put down the psychological prescription for masturbation before the religious because I thought it more important. They are inter-related. Advice is not less religious because it is based on scientific psychology. Nor is it bad psychology because it is good religion.

It is necessary here, however, to state that in my opinion, any physical advice is quite definitely of inferior value and would not, of itself, lead to self-mastery in this matter. Nevertheless advice on the physical side is of considerable complementary value, especially in certain cases.

1. All men who are seriously troubled by masturbation should take medical advice as to whether the small operation of circumcision is not advisable. Quite often, in men, the foreskin is long, or tight, and rubbing on the clothing sets up an irritation to relieve which the organ is tickled, scratched or rubbed and the habit begun. It is easy to begin. It is hard to end. It is obvious enough that if the cause of such irritation can be removed it is the first thing to have done. Almost any doctor would do such a simple operation with only a few days loss of time by the patient. Such an operation also has had, in cases I have known, a tremendous psychological value in marking the beginning of a new sense of self-mastery. A more difficult treatment is the injection of silver nitrate into the prostatic urethra. This, of course, requires very skilled medical help.

2. The genital area should always be kept scrupulously clean. For both sexes the presence of fluff from underwear or any other cause of irritation may lead to the habit. It is advisable, where convenient, not merely to bathe that area *only*, though this is better than nothing. But such treatment may rather draw attention to the matter in hand: Warm baths—not soaking in a *hot* bath—every evening, followed by the cooling of the water till it is uncomfortably cold, or followed by a cold sponge are better. The whole body is then bathed and attention not focused on one particular area, though washing should involve—in uncircumcised men—the pulling back of the foreskin, and in women the separation for cleansing purposes of the *labia majora* or outer lips.

3. It would be of inestimable help in the overcoming of masturbation for many people if they took advice which can be stated in five words, "Get up when you wake." Following this, ten minutes' "physical jerks" by some exercises such as those described by Muller in *My System* and *My System for Ladies* would be of great value to most people.<sup>1</sup> Muller's system contains advice regarding a cold bath, the daily value of which can hardly be exaggerated. There is all the difference in the world between coming down to breakfast happy in mind, invigorated in body, with an exhilaration that pervades both, and lying fuggily in bed till the last moment, tormented—as many folk are in the first waking moment—with sexual thoughts, and then jumping straight out of bed into one's clothes and, still half-asleep, dully and wearily facing a day that already feels half spoiled by a stain of mind if not of body.

4. The value of games is psychological rather than physical. They keep the mind away from dwelling on sex fantasies by filling it with pure thoughts of sport, but it is a delusion to suppose they do much more. When I was a lieutenant in the Army it was the fond belief of a certain colonel that he only had to tire his men out to keep them pure. Little knowing it, he probably increased anything in the way of sex temptation that existed. In the same way women have told me they have taken long and arduous walks to help them fight masturbation. But, unfortunately, physical exercise does not tire the sex instinct which is capable of attacking and of securing a victory just because a person is too tired to meet it properly. In the same way the cult of games in public and boarding-schools, both for boys and girls, must not be supposed automatically to prevent masturbation. If a boy or girl is *interested* in games, those games help enormously as an emotional outlet with a corresponding sexual value. But if this interest is not maintained, merely to tire out the body without diverting psychological

<sup>1</sup> I mention Muller's system partly because it has done so much for me, and partly because one requires no apparatus. All the exercises can be done in ten minutes wherever one happens to be. The two books mentioned cost 3s. 6d. each from Athletic Publications Ltd., Link House, 54 Fetter Lane, London, E.C.

energies is to render an individual's sex problem more difficult of solution. It is unwise that in so many schools sport should be compulsory unless a medical certificate is produced, or that the non-player should be pilloried, if only with a question mark. For many children insistence on games is as unwise for psychological reasons as it is in other children for medical reasons.

5. It is wise to avoid heavy meals late at night, especially those containing meat or highly-spiced foods.

6. Coverings in bed should be as light as possible and the bed not too soft. Feather beds were invented by the devil. The feet should be warm, of course, but the cooler the lower part of the body is the better.

The above suggestions would, I believe, carried out over a period of some months, effect in most cases a cure. Whatever our private views on the "wickedness" or non-moral value of masturbation, it is best in all cases requiring cure to regard them as cases for treatment generally due to an infantile auto-erotic attitude to life. The victim has never emotionally grown up. He has suffered some arrest of his psychological sex development, and will respond better to a *treatment* on the lines indicated above than if he be regarded as a sinner needing salvation. Some have said to such a victim, "You will be all right when you're married." This is not by any means certain. If the person concerned is really in love, if he understands the physical factors which do so much to make or mar married happiness,<sup>1</sup> all may be well. But if he is not in love, if the physical factors in marriage are never taken into account, if his wife is cold or revolts at intercourse, if his attitude to sex continues to be maladjusted, there is every reason to suppose that masturbation will continue during marriage as it does in many unhappy marriages of which I have been told.

### *Masturbation in Children*

We now pass on to the question of masturbation in children. Erotic experiences in early childhood are a fruitful cause of immediate or subsequent masturbation. I find

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II.



that as the result of ignorance on the part of the child—an ignorance which stimulates curiosity—or unscrupulous treatment on the part of a nursemaid or servant or “friend” of the family, or as a result of both these factors together, in days much earlier than most parents imagine, the sex instinct of a child is awakened and directed into morbid channels so that not only is a healthy, normal attitude to sex made difficult or impossible, but bad habits are begun, or a wrong mental attitude to sex engendered, or both, leading to all kinds of self-torture and reproach, repression and shame, and, only too often, perversion and complete breakdown. I quote here some notes kindly written for me by my friend, Dr. Marion Greaves, who has had a large experience of dealing with masturbation among children.

“Babies and young children usually find out by accident that rubbing of these parts gives them a comfortable feeling. It may be occasionally through the handling of an ignorant or foolish nurse or maid, but one often finds it in children who have been tended by no one but their mother. Children old enough to talk will usually say quite frankly that it gives them a ‘comfy’ feeling, unless they have already been taught to associate it with shame. In the child who has not been bullied about it, treatment is usually fairly easy and simply consists in distracting his or her attention in every possible way. I noticed a boy of three handling himself while having sunlight treatment. His mother said it only occurred when he was unoccupied. I merely said, ‘Put your hands by your side, Jim, they keep the light off,’ and during all his subsequent treatment it never occurred again. Had he been told it was naughty, the glamour of the forbidden and non-understood would have attached to it. A child with a full, varied and interesting life will not masturbate, and a child whose attention and interest is not centred on the habit by ill-advised commands to stop it will be easily cured by a counter-suggestion. Means such as bandaging the hands, wrapping the parts up in a napkin and so on, should never be used, unless some absolutely convincing excuse can be given, which does not focus the child’s attention on the true cause. In older children, while the



habit may have started as above,<sup>1</sup> it will almost certainly have been complicated by a feeling of naughtiness and shame, caused by efforts to cure. It may also be a refuge for an inferiority sense, which again will be deepened and strengthened by the unavailing threats, entreaties and exhortations of its well-meaning elders. It is quite common to find it in the less pretty, clever, or attractive child of a family, and it is easy to see that 'the comfy feeling' is a refuge from the depression caused by the inferiority sense, and that the sense of powerlessness and inadequacy caused by always feeling naughty makes control and cure impossible. Not only this, it may be an outlet for a baffled sense of power and self-assertion. In these cases, if it is at all possible to get the child's confidence, usually extremely difficult, as he or she is a sort of Ishmael, the first steps should be to assure him that his habit is not really wicked or shameful, it is merely rather childish and bad manners, and like other bad habits not quite up to his general standard of manner and behaviour. Secondly, the inferiority sense should be corrected if present. The child should be encouraged in any particular bent and made to see that while, perhaps, he is not as good as his brother at sums, he is infinitely better at drawing and that his efforts are just as deserving of praise, although they may be directed differently. He should be given plenty of occupation, amusement and outlet for energy—Scouts or Girl Guides are excellent.

"The habit should not be harped on, but after one or two perfectly clear talks the subject should be dropped, and the other measures relied on to work a cure. It is as well not to connect the subject in any way with sex in a child, or it may cause a sense of shame and disgust which will cause a sex repression.

"In the adult much holds good which has been said about the older child. The sense of guilt and impurity is likely to be much more deeply rooted, and there will also

<sup>1</sup> Note also that it may be begun through accidental irritation caused in boys by phimosis (constriction of the prepuce), and in girls by worms in the anus or vulva.

be worry and fear of results. It is, of course, much more definitely and consciously a sexual indulgence in the adult, and the explanation must be much more thorough. But the reason for the inferiority sense, if present, and the reason for the arrest of development at the infantile stage must be found and the whole process explained to, and realized by the patient. Here is the place for the exercise of self-discipline and religious influence, which are so often urged as a cure for the habit, in developing the personality as a whole to a stage where solace is not sought in easy self-indulgence and where interest is diverted from the ego to others, i.e. to the adult, altruistic, hetero-sexuality. This is a possible and real cure of a disease, not the mere cutting off of a symptom, which, while disgusting its victim with himself, seems to have complete dominion over him, and which, because of his lack of understanding, he feels powerless to cure, even by prayer and fasting."

#### INVERSION OR HOMOSEXUALITY

Sexual inversion or homosexuality is the name given to that perversion of the sex instinct in which the sex energies, instead of going out to a member of the opposite sex, are directed towards a member of the same sex.

Most psychologists distinguish between two kinds of homosexuality: (1) Innate and (2) Acquired.

1. Innate Homosexuality. This is one of the most distressing disharmonies which the psychologist will ever have to meet. There are some physical diseases which, at the present advance-point of medical and surgical science, are incurable. I am afraid that innate inversion is a psychological disharmony for which at present psychological science can do but little. The inversion indeed is thought by some to be due to remote prenatal causes. Alleviation has been found in some cases by the use of hypnosis, but the word cure could not fairly be used. Treatment is generally directed to the deflecting of the sexual energies, the avoidance of all sex stimulation and the removal of the guilt-feelings which make the homosexual of this class feel a kind of outcaste or leper. By such treatment the case of a youth

which I had for treatment cleared up considerably. Feelings of self-loathing and revulsion were at last removed from his mind. He was shown how to act when certain impulses were strong within him, and he is now living a useful and happy life. His disability is causing him a minimum amount of deprivation, but unless psychological research opens up a new way he will never have the happiness of those whose sex instinct is normal. A congenital abnormality cannot, however, be called vice, and a realization of this fact alone is of great comfort to innate inverts whose mental torture is sometimes distressing.

2. Acquired Homosexuality. This is a perversion practised by those who indulge in sexual relations with members of the same sex. Such perversion, it must be pointed out, is not *only* the result of vice. It seems sometimes to be brought on in women by ovarian disease, the climacteric or undesired pregnancy. It is sometimes brought on in men by sex assault and unscrupulous manipulation in childhood. It is brought on in both sexes by acquired cerebral disease or by over-stimulation of the sexual centres, especially in early life. I had an unhappy case of a woman of forty who was "married" to a young girl of eighteen. The word "married" was her own word, and she wore a wedding ring to make the relation seem more realistic. Her question to me was, "Is it right?" Some would regard the question as monstrous, but of course there is no help for a person in trouble if one simply holds up hands of horror. Her reasons in favour of the relationship were that she herself had parted with the idea of marriage; her young friend "liked it," and thought the world of her. They did no one any harm. It was their own affair. They slept together, embraced and kissed each other and sexually excited one another, but it concerned them only. What could there be wrong in it? In answering the question whether inverted practices are wrong we must not include those between boys of 13-15 and girls between 12-14. At these ages the sex instinct is not localized in the sex organs and it would be unfair to treat such practices between children with the grave importance which the problem has in adult life.

The answer for adults is, I think, convincing. (1) Any perversion—here differing from a sublimation—always makes exceedingly difficult and frequently impossible the redirection of the sex energies to the biological channel if ever that way is opened up. The older woman might answer that this did not concern her. But it vitally concerns a girl of eighteen who has a reasonable expectation of normal marriage. Nor is it right to do fellow beings an injury even if they welcome the injury. Such a principle would make such prostitution a moral and ethical act.

(2) The fact that the older woman took her courage in her hands to ask me her question—a question demanding courage—shows the uneasiness of her mind. As a matter of fact subsequent enquiry showed a good deal of "conscience distress." She was a religious woman with ideals and aspirations and was frequently miserable about it. I do not think the thought of public opinion had much to do with her conscience distress. Nor was it all derived from those taboos of the past which are capable of making an innocent practice, such as intercourse within marriage, seem unclean. Her religious feelings were hurt. This is an interesting point illustrating that good religion is never bad psychology nor good psychology bad religion.

(3) The most potent argument, however, against inverted practices is that the sex instinct is roused and yet is not satisfied. It is bad enough, as we have said, to keep a hungry man in a barn where there is neither smell nor sight of food. It is a cruel torture to take him repeatedly to an hotel grill-room, within sight and smell of food, and then take him back to the barn. Normally many young women are not really sexually awakened fully until they are married. When they *are* awakened and roused their sex hunger can be satisfied. But for women either at eighteen or forty to stimulate each other's sex instinct constantly and deny that instinct harmonious satisfaction is a practice fraught with peril indeed.

While I was writing this chapter I was consulted by a young woman of twenty-seven whose friend was ten years senior. In this case the relationship was limited to

"cuddling" in bed. But sex excitement always followed. My interviewer thought I was unnecessarily alarming and assured me, what I know to be true, that the practice is an exceedingly common one especially among unmarried women,<sup>1</sup> far commoner in women than in men because men seek other ways of gratifying their instinct. At the same time, without being alarmist, it must be said that very, very few people have any idea of the distress caused by awakened and unsatisfied sex desire.

I write this hoping that it may be read in time by many who are indulging in practices which seem so innocent, particularly between two women who are both of mature age. The friendship of one woman for another is often a beautiful and strengthening thing. Let it be kept on the level of the mind and the spirit and not become the means of bringing sex desires to consciousness. If one of the two people concerned in invertive practices is exceedingly young then of course the cruelty of the older person's action is even more pronounced.

(4) It need hardly be added, perhaps, that the homosexual relationship is usually selfish and limited as well as jealous. A "G.P." (*grande passion*) of two schoolgirls for one another or of one for a mistress is normal enough and indeed is to be welcomed if the mistress handles it properly. It is an expression of affection which derives its energy from the sex instinct before the latter is recognized by the conscious mind and it helps to develop character, not only because of its values as an outlet, but because it develops loyalty, sacrifice, co-operation and enthusiasm for social ends. But if it does not pass into the flowering of sex interest in the other sex, which is right and normal at puberty, the matter should be looked into. Homosexuality is as often caused by a sex nature that refuses to grow up as it is by a sex nature thwarted by death or jilting or disappointment in the case of a loved member of the opposite sex. There is no value in mentioning here the physical signs which, to a keen observer, suggest inversion, though a warning may be given

<sup>1</sup> Though probably true homosexuals are not more than 3 per cent of the population. This is the figure generally given.

that it is quite inaccurate that a so-called masculine woman has any tendency to be inverted. Even a woman who tends to adopt the garments as well as the ways of men is not necessarily inverted.

The treatment is not dissimilar to that outlined for a case of masturbation. Unless the perversion is congenital the methods suggested on p. 102 should help towards a cure. In both types analysis has sometimes given good results and I have used hypnosis with success, but it would be folly to suggest that the cure of inversion is ever easy. The modern attitude must not be to label inversion as a loathsome vice—and we may remember the schoolboys expelled for it and the “criminals” punished for it<sup>1</sup>—but as a psychological disharmony, the causes of which we must investigate, and the sufferers from which, with pity and skill, we must try to help. The treatment will require endless goodwill and strong purpose on the part of the patient, and discrimination, patience, skill, and the refusal to hold out too optimistic hopes on the part of the psychologist. The most that can be done in many cases is the removal of morbid emotion and self-loathing, the reduction of sexual hyperæsthesia, the fear that inversion is a sign of mental deficiency, and the strengthening of the patient’s spiritual life so that he may not cause others to acquire the perversion or endanger their well-being.

#### FETICHISM

The main value of these notes on the perversions of the sex instinct lies in the fact that many people are at once comforted enormously to discover that an abnormality in themselves, which they rigidly keep to themselves, and which excites in them veritable tortures of fear and self-loathing,

<sup>1</sup> English law provides the punishment even of penal servitude for the homosexual who practises “sodomy.” Of course, the victim of such practices must be protected from the invert, but if the inversion is innate the punishment of a court is both cruel and useless. If it is acquired, it is often through some early sex-assault which has led to the inversion, and, if so, punishment seems to me irrelevant. Careful study of the subject would tend to indicate that most cases of inversion are those in which the invert is a patient needing treatment, even though he is segregated for it, rather than a criminal needing punishment.



turns out to be a disharmony of which every psychologist is aware, and concerning which he can give many parallel cases from his own experience as well as supply the monstrous phenomenon with a name. An eruption on the skin of the body can be terrifying while we do not know what it is. Such terror is itself more capable of doing us harm than the spots on our chest. But when a doctor comes and tells us it is measles and that he has known many such cases, our terror disappears at once. The horror is not an unknown horror. And it is the unknown that terrifies us most.

Fetichism is a perversion characterized by the fact that an object, not normally sexually exciting, is more capable of setting up sex excitement even than objects with an inherent sex-appeal. Frequently indeed sex-interest is entirely drawn off and diverted from normal objects of that interest such as, for example, the nude body of a member of the opposite sex, and concentrated on hair, shoes, feet, hands, handkerchiefs, gloves and so forth.

In one case which was brought to me, a clergyman complained that as soon as a lady extended a white hand towards him, to his great dismay he was seized with all but uncontrollable sexual desires. This is a case of hand-fetichism. In another a man complained that the sight of a woman's shapely shoe excited in him the most tempestuous sexual feeling. This case (shoe-fetichism) cleared up when, at last, after a very long investigation, a repressed memory was brought to consciousness. A young nurse-girl who wore dainty shoes on small feet, when left in charge of the patient in childhood's days, had often undressed him, laid him on his back on a rug in front of the fire and tickled him in the genital area with the toe of her shoe until he was sexually excited. His sex initiation was thus by means of a shoe, and when his sex nature developed a shoe remained the most potent of sexual stimuli.<sup>1</sup>

Cases are often met with in the press in which young girls have had a lock or plait of their hair cut off. This, of course, was more common before the days of the shingle. It

<sup>1</sup> One is bound here to utter a warning in regard to the harm done



can be safely assumed that nearly all these cases are cases of hair-fetichism. The culprit is a menace to society obviously, but it is hard to see what three months' imprisonment will do for him. He is really a patient needing treatment rather than a criminal needing punishment, and his case is one that must inspire pity. Dimly conscious of pent-up emotion within him, emotion which we know to be sexual, he feels that this emotion can only find expression through stroking or caressing a girl's hair. Driven to desperation, never taught how to deal with his problem, at last he slashes off a plait, and, if caught, suffers imprisonment. One feels that the real culprit is often some irresponsible servant who years back led him into some sexual malpractice in which her own hair played a part.

Fetichism thus occurs in people who in early days have suffered some form of abnormal initiation into sexual excitement before the sexual instincts have fully developed. It is acquired later, only, as a rule, by those for whom normal methods of sex gratification are for various reasons impossible. At the same time some cases appear to be, if not hereditary, due to a congenital predisposition. It is most common in nervous, sensitive and precocious people.

The treatment of fetichism need not be dwelt upon here. It needs careful and thorough technical psychological investigation. If it is not of long standing, however, and if the incident in early life can be recovered to consciousness, the fetichism may disappear. If incurable—as in the case of a congenital condition—treatment can be directed to lessening the sexual hyperæsthesia, avoiding all conscious stimulation by means of the fetich, bringing trouble to others, negating all feelings of moral leprosy, and sublimating and controlling the sex energies.

by unscrupulous servants and nurse-girls. Cases have come to me in which such servants have exposed themselves or their charges, taught them masturbation, made their charges excite them sexually, and even attempted coitus with them. In one case of an Oxford graduate which came to me the symptoms could be traced almost entirely to the malpractices of a servant maid. A servant maid should never be allowed to sleep with children; not even in the same room. And the credentials of "nurse-maids" cannot be looked into too carefully.

## SADISM AND MASOCHISM

Sadism, which gets its name from the notorious Marquis de Sade, is the name given to that perversion in which sexual satisfaction is derived from the infliction of pain on others, or by witnessing such infliction during which the sadist identifies himself with the person inflicting the pain.

Masochism is the name given to the perversion in which sexual satisfaction is derived from the suffering of pain inflicted by others, or by witnessing such infliction during which the masochist identifies himself with the victim.

There comes back to me very vividly from my own childhood, memories of a woman teacher who delighted in caning boys, the bigger the better. Even my childish eyes noted the flashing of her own, the quivering of her lips, the excitement manifested in every part of her body, the obvious joy in the violent cuts she gave, and her morbid interest in the weals thus raised. I know now that she was a sadist and that she should never have been allowed to teach boys, let alone touch them. Mr. Hugh Walpole—the truest psychologist among modern novelists—in one of his novels describes a similar thing. In the same way I had to deal some years ago with the case of a girl of seventeen whose father constantly stripped and caned her. He had done so within a week of my seeing his daughter, and I had to make him promise that if I treated his daughter he must desist from this practice, and I had to show him that he needed treatment more than she did.

The matter opens up the whole matter of corporal punishment and we cannot, of course, discuss all the bearings of the matter here. Some things my reading and experience have taught me. Corporal punishment should always be regarded as a last resort in dealing with children. It should *never* be inflicted by a person of the opposite sex, except in the cases of children under five. Unless this is done it is not only possible that a sleeping sadism or masochism may be aroused in the inflictor, but also in the victim. Corporal punishment should *never* be inflicted, even by a person of the same sex, in the presence of anyone

else. I could give case after case of sadistic impulses being aroused in a person witnessing the act of punishment inflicted on another, impulses often leading to perversion extending into adult life. And it must be remembered that perversion almost always makes normal sexuality difficult, unsatisfying, or impossible. The point that publicly administered corporal punishment in school is a deterrent to onlookers is of negligible value compared with the risks run of inducing sadism or masochism. I heard recently of a woman teacher, teaching a mixed class, and caning children of eleven of both sexes before the class. One can hardly think of a situation more dangerous in its possibilities of creating sexual disharmony in the lives of the children in such a class, not to mention the morbid and demoralizing effect of such procedure in the life of the teacher. Case after case could be cited of later sadism, leading to criminal sexual assault, resulting from a single occasion on which children witnessed the punishment of a fellow scholar, particularly a scholar or relative of the opposite sex, and of course more particularly where the recipient of the punishment has been made to expose part of his person for purposes of punishment. Rousseau tells us that his own masochism was due to a whipping at the age of eight. "Who would have believed," he says, "that this childish punishment received at the age of eight from the hand of a young woman of thirty would have determined my tastes, desires and passions for the rest of my life?"

Without entering into other arguments for and against corporal punishment, every psychologist is glad that it is being relegated to the barbarities of the past, for the simple reason that his case-book reveals how often sexual excitement has been set up by it in the person who inflicts it, the person who suffers it, and in those who look on,<sup>1</sup> even when all are of the same sex and even in the seclusion of the home.

Sadistic *impulses* should not alarm those in whom they

<sup>1</sup>Or even hear it. I recently had a case of masochism largely caused by the patient hearing in childhood in the next house the sound of a strap used on the bodies of the children next door, and their subsequent screams. This caused the most intense sexual excitement.

appear. The ancient practice of subduing, if necessary by force, the mate one chose, still influences conduct. Erotic pleasure induced by hurting is very deep in the human heart, especially the masculine heart. A Russian bride used to present her lord with a whip at their marriage and was said not to be completely happy till it had been used. And one has memories of shoes tied to wedding-cars even in modern England. It is worth while quieting some who may feel alarmed by saying that there is a normal amount of sadistic and masochistic feeling which must not be called perversion. In a first intercourse, for instance, this is often true and should not be regarded as abnormal.

Often a sadistic impulse is merely a sign of arrested sexual development. A youth will find himself unmoved at the sight of a pretty girl and sexually excited by the sight of a beaten horse. His so-called sadism is a vicarious method of exercising those qualities of self-assertion and masculinity which lie behind the phrase, "Chase me, Charlie." Charlie, being too shy to chase anyone, finds his repressed impulse exciting him by any kind of violence. He only needs sexually to grow up and accept his privileges and the "sadism" will disappear.

#### SCOPTOPHILIA AND EXHIBITIONISM

These two perversions of the sex instinct need little comment. Scoptophilia is the perversion characterized by an abnormal desire to see the genital area in the body of the opposite sex. Exhibitionism is the perversion characterized by an abnormal desire to show such areas to members of the opposite sex.

The first is not to be thought of as a perversion unless the desire is really morbid and abnormal, since it is part of normal sexuality to *desire* to see the body of the opposite sex and in some people to desire to show their own bodies. To deny this is to assert that the people who patronize public entertainments in which a maximum of the body of the opposite sex is shown—ballet dancing and boxing—are all perverts. They are not. If they go for that purpose they merely have not grown up sexually. They need education

and adjustment. If only it could be arranged, six months in the tropics would cure most of them and most true *voyeurs*—as the French call scotophilists—as well. It is because the sight of the body of the opposite sex is rare that it is sexually exciting. Once get used to it and it rouses no excitement at all.

If scotophilia is a true perversion it needs analytical treatment. In the meantime it should be controlled and abnormal feelings of guilt be dissociated from it.

Much of what has just been written applies to exhibitionism. It is not abnormal in people with a strong sex instinct to desire to expose themselves.

In women it is often a vestige of the desire to lead on the male and it expresses their desire for a mate. They must not be panicky. Nor must they be regarded as perverts. To do the latter would be to indict nearly all the ladies in evening-dress at any ball. It is a normal impulse which in primitive society had a value and a place. Now society imposes a restraint on the tendency, *lost*, carried too far, it makes virtue more difficult. But it need not be regarded, *while only a tendency*, as immoral.

If it is a true perversion—as in many cases of men which appear in the press—it needs treatment rather than punishment. Many controlled people never give way, but they find traces of both perversions in their dreams. In these they either view the bodies of others or themselves walk naked through the town.

This note on exhibitionism and scotophilia must not be thought to suggest that the desire to see and show the body to a beloved linked to one by marriage is “wrong” or abnormal. No false notion of propriety need prevent both husband and wife, especially in those early days of marriage when the physical is so assertive, from the legitimate enjoyment, which to some warm natures is free, glad and joyous as well as natural, in the viewing of one another’s bodies.

#### VENEREAL DISEASE<sup>1</sup>

It seems advisable to include this section if only to give

<sup>1</sup> This section is specially contributed by a medical expert.

peace of mind to those who think they have contracted venereal disease or who live in constant fear of so doing.

There are two main types of venereal disease, namely syphilis and gonorrhea. They are both caused by bacteria and *only rarely caused by anything but direct contact*, that is, sexual intercourse with an infected person, as the germ in both cases is delicate and does not long survive outside the human body.<sup>1</sup> Also it is doubtful whether it can obtain entrance to the body through unbroken skin or mucous membrane, though it may do so in a lesion which is exceedingly minute.

In syphilis there is an incubation period of two to six weeks, and the first sign is the formation of a hard nodule or chancre on the genital parts, usually the foreskin in the male, and the labia in the female. There are also, much more rarely, extragenital chancres, as on the lip. From kissing an infected person or using an infected cup, it is said to be possible to contract syphilis, but, as the above reasons show, this must be of the rarest possible occurrence. The chancre breaks down and ulcerates, giving rise to an enlargement of the neighbouring lymphatic glands. This is known as the primary stage and it is in this stage that treatment is most hopeful. If untreated this passes on to the secondary stage, with characteristic skin eruptions, infections of the throat and other mucous membranes, and inflammation of lymphatic glands. In a variable time, months or even years, this may pass on to a tertiary stage, and may cause abscess-like formations known as gummata in any organ, or may affect the blood-vessels or the central nervous system. Aneurism, locomotor ataxia and general paralysis of the insane are all manifestations of this stage. The disease may be transmitted to children, causing death, mental defects or serious disease.

Medical opinion varies as regards preventative measures after infection. Probably, however, they cannot be regarded as effective with any certainty unless efficiently applied within a few hours after exposure to infection. Treatment

<sup>1</sup> For this reason Venereal Disease, though not technically a psychological sex perversion, is best dealt with under the heading "The Mishandled Sex Life."



should be prompt and prolonged.

In gonorrhea the incubation period is a few days, varying from two to eight. In the male the disease affects the urethra and bladder, causing pain, swelling and discharge, with some general upset. It may spread backwards, involving the prostate gland, testicles and seminal vesicles, and later complications may be stricture or narrowing of the urinary passage, inflammations of joints, eyes and heart.

In the woman there is also discharge, pain in the bladder and irritation. It may affect the Fallopian tubes and ovaries, giving rise to abscess-formations, general peritonitis, and subsequent sterility. The other complications are as in the male. The gonococcus—as the micro-organism of gonorrhea is called—is also very short-lived outside the body, so that infection, unless by direct contact, is rare. The child of an infected mother may contract the infection during birth and conjunctivitis or inflammation of the eyes, and, in neglected cases, blindness may result. The infection may be conveyed by an uncured discharge, even after all other symptoms have disappeared.

Naturally a great number of prostitutes are infected, and the danger of infection, and the fact that preventative measures other than abstinence are of doubtful value, cannot be too much emphasized; nor can the importance of early and thorough treatment be overstressed. The patient who has incurred disease should allow no feeling of shame to debar him or her from at once consulting a doctor, and, moreover, a patient should be completely frank. A doctor is not a judge of morals, and lack of frankness on the part of the patient may make a diagnosis one of great difficulty, and valuable time may be lost. Early diagnosis and thorough treatment on modern lines may save untold suffering, not only to the patient but to his or her innocent partner in marriage, and to future generations.



## SEX AND SOCIETY

"All who are familiar with the stories of (these) young people, or who have helped in any way to repair the damage or retrieve the tragedy, know how often these young people have been as much sinned against as sinning. In the case of those who come from our poorer homes, overcrowding, the lack of privacy, often the lack of decency, have completely blunted the spiritual perceptions which give to sex its finer meaning. The factories in which they work are often foul with the conversation which makes sex cheap. . . . In the paucity of interests available, the sex thrill, of which no economic circumstances can deprive them . . . stands out as easily attainable and overwhelmingly attractive.

"In the discussions on the subject of marriage difficulties it is amazing how completely the power of Christ to make people master of any situation in which they are compelled to live is so often neglected. . . . People proceed to make rearrangements and to work for a very shabby kind of second best when spiritual resources which might transform the situation are at their disposal. No one on behalf of the Church ought to be allowed to handle the disagreements of married people, or to deal with any kind of breach between them in its earlier stages—who does not believe quite fervently in the power of conversion and the immediate influence of Christ upon the lives of the people of to-day."—CANON T. GUY ROGERS, Rector of Birmingham, in *The Church and the People*. (Sampson Low.)

## DIVORCE AND COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE

THERE is no doubt in my own mind that the ideal to be held up is that nothing should break the marriage bond whatever happens. In some cases to be mentioned later, a temporary separation might be essential to guard the lives of little children or to prevent a greater evil than separation entails, but every actual divorce does something to lessen the status of marriage in the mind of the community and to shake its faith in the wedded state. Those who look on, and especially those who are the children of divorced parents, can never see marriage with the bloom on it. Their vision is spoilt by the divorce of people near to them. Only recently a little girl of thirteen was brought to me whose nervous condition was, I am quite sure, largely due to the

strain of constantly trying to account for her father's absence without telling the truth that her mother had divorced him. And though it may be a very hard thing to say in many cases, and the proclamation of an ideal too high for attainment, in every wrecked marriage I should always give the place of honour to those who—for the sake of others and for the sake of the ideals of marriage and home life which so badly need implanting in our midst—do not escape through the door of divorce, but who take an attitude to the situation which will redeem that situation and not spread the poison from one wound through the whole body of the community.

In *The Meaning of the Cross*<sup>1</sup> the Rev. Dr. W. R. Maltby writes as follows: "The writer knew a working man in the North of England whose wife, soon after her marriage, drifted into vicious ways, and went rapidly from bad to worse. He came home one Sunday evening to find, as he had found a dozen times before, that she had gone on a new debauch. He knew in what condition she would return after two or three days of a nameless life. He sat down in the cheerless house to look the truth in the face and to find what he must do. The worst had happened too often to leave him with much hope, and he saw in part what was in store for him. He made his choice to hold by his wife to the end, and to keep a home for her who would not make one for him. Now that a new and terrible meaning had passed into the words, 'For better, for worse,' he reaffirmed his marriage vow. Later, when someone who knew them both intimately ventured to commiserate him, he answered, 'Not a word! She is my wife, and I shall love her as long as there is breath in my body.' She did not mend, and died in his house after some years, in a shameful condition, with his hands spread over her in pity and prayer."

No one would ever dream of asking for legislation to make such an attitude compulsory on all, but I cannot doubt that it is the ideal way and we must not shrink from saying so.

When the door of divorce is opened, another door automatically shuts; the door of forgiveness and ultimate restoration. No Christian can regard the closing of that door as

<sup>1</sup> Manuals of Fellowship Series (3d.), Epworth Press.

ideal. Of course if love breaks down on *both sides* there is no point in insisting on union. Ideals will only work when practised by idealists. The sacrifice of selfish happiness for the sake of an ideal, like any other sacrifice, is valueless if resentfully made. Kindness that is not spontaneous is as valueless as the "forgiveness" of Uriah Heep when he says, "I do forgive you, Master David, and you cannot help it because I do it." Few things strike me as so indecent as a militantly and aggressively innocent wife being kind to an unfaithful husband.

Psychology has little bearing on divorce except to point out the ill-effects on the children of divorced persons and the possible "nasty taste in the mouth" of divorced persons in regard to marriage whether they re-marry or not.

Religion, however, has much to say and we must ask, however incompletely, what the opinion of Jesus was, for the mind of Christ as far as this can be perceived, is the Christian standard.

I think it is clear that Jesus was against divorce. Yet He recognizes that it must be held to be permissible. The Mosaic Law allowed divorce (Deut. xxiv. 3), and when Jesus was asked (Mark x. 1-9) whether it was lawful, those who asked were obviously trying to entrap Him. Jesus' answer is sublime, "For the hardness of your hearts he (Moses) wrote you this commandment, but from the beginning it was not so, for when God created man He made them male and female. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. Those therefore whom God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

Jesus' answer would thus seem to be that ideally divorce is less than the best. In practice it must be allowed in hard cases.

According to St. Matthew's Gospel the question is put to Jesus thus: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for every cause?" Whether this is the same incident is differently regarded by scholars, but it is certainly the question we want answering. Jesus' answer (Matt. xix. 3-9) is, "Whosoever shall divorce his wife except for unchastity and shall

marry another commits adultery." (Cf. Matt. v. 32 which is in agreement.)

A good many scholars<sup>1</sup> reject the Mattheian account and hold that there was only one such incident which Mark correctly records. They point out that Luke (xvi. 18) and Paul (1 Cor. vii. 10-11) support Mark, and Paul's "yet not I but the Lord" in this passage is a strong word, as is also Mark's reiteration of Jesus' position in Mark x. 10-12. It is supposed that Matthew watered down the passage because Mark's expressed an ideal too high for the Christian society. Whether this is so or not I am not competent to judge.

In trying to summarize the attitude of Jesus we must clearly see that His teaching was never meant to be a rigid code, intended to be incorporated in the legislation of any state calling itself Christian. If this were carried out it would land most Church members in prison. Nor are we to deduce His teaching merely from isolated texts. We are to catch His spirit and apply it as far as ever we can. As I read His mind in regard to divorce it is that divorce is not to be practised until every other avenue by which it can be avoided has been tried and only then with the regret which accompanies the feeling that only a way which is second-best is being found.

Of course if there is unfaithfulness on both sides it will probably be better for the two to separate, and less harm may be done to the children by such separation than by maintaining any kind of living together. Here the word divorce is hardly the word. Neither side has any right to speak of divorcing the other. Where life is a perpetual cat and dog affair, it may be said that it is more immoral to live together than to live apart. As we say, ideal methods will not work without idealism, and if there is none on either side then some other method must be found.

But take the very hardest cases in which divorce seems

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Dr. H. D. A. Major, *The Modern Churchman*, Conference No. 1930, p. 331. Also *The Relation of the Sexes*, Copec Reports, vol. iv, p. 166 (Dr. W. F. Lofthouse, Chairman). In the same volume, p. 123, Rev. Dr. W. F. Howard contributes a valuable essay on the teaching of the New Testament in regard to marriage.

even the best way out; cases in which one party is unfaithful, or a drunkard, or addicted to physical violence; cases in which a man sentenced to a long imprisonment is not divorced and returns to bring a little family down again in moral disgrace and ruin; or heartbreaking cases, for instance, such as one I know in which a young girl married an old reprobate of sixty, only to find after marriage what a liar and beast he was; can anyone doubt that if the injured party or parties resolutely determined to put away all hate and resentment, and mobilize all their energies of love and kindness and direct them towards the reformation of the guilty party, the result on the latter, on the former, on the home and on the State would be far more purifying and redemptive than the easy way of permissible divorce. Of course the other way is one that asks much. It asks more than many would give, and no one has any right to label divorce "wicked" in such cases. But we are seeking the way out which religion would suggest. We are asking what is ideal. And the symbol of our religion is not a cushion but a cross. The way of the cross is always hard. It is always heavy in its demands but it is often the ideal way.

At the same time no vestige of condemnation can attach to the action of those who, looking at the matter all round, decide from the highest motives that divorce is the only way out *for them*. The circumstances may indeed make divorce the only way of protecting little children. There certainly *are* circumstances which make the continuance of the married state a greater evil than divorce. Miss Maude Royden<sup>1</sup> tells of a girl of nineteen married to a man of fifty-six who was immoral in mind and diseased in body. It is hard to say that there is any better way in such a case than the divorce which was effected. Of course, as Miss Royden says, although the pair were married in Church, no one could suppose God had joined them together, or that they were "married" in any true sense. A heavy responsibility rests on the minister who permitted and officiated at such a "union." It seems to me wrong to *insist* on the continuance

<sup>1</sup> *Sex and Common Sense*, p. 104.

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of the pretence of marriage when, in that marriage, all true love and feeling are dead.

One task must be undertaken, and this book seeks to contribute to that end; it is the task of training young people in the psychology and physiology of sex, the implications of marriage, the lifting up of sex problems into the sphere of the spiritual, the danger of going into marriage *merely* on the strength of physical attraction or emotional romance. Clergy and ministers in future—especially since the Church takes such a stern line in regard to divorce and the subsequent marriage of divorced persons, even though innocent—must take far greater care that, before they marry people, those people have a fuller realization of that entire self-giving which marriage implies. The Church has always been afraid of sex, and is stern in regard to sexual delinquency, and yet inconsistently indifferent to sexual hygiene and the prevention of disaster. The modern prevalence of divorce shrieks aloud for preventive work along psychological and educative lines. The Church at present blesses the marriages of undisciplined, irresponsible people, often only out for physical self-gratification however unconsciously so, without even asking whether there is physical disease or insanity on either side. If the marriage is unhappy and divorce is sought, the Church holds up hands of horror and does nothing but utter gloomy and inefficient anathemas.

The state of the law on divorce is chaotic and must be made more humane and more reasonable,<sup>1</sup> which is not saying more easy. Many anomalies exist. For instance, if one party in a marriage breaks the marriage bond the other can obtain relief, but if both break it neither can obtain freedom. Again, if two people find soon after marriage that their marriage was a mistake they cannot be freed unless one of them commits an offence or deserts for a period of three years. Again, if one party commits adultery and the other waits patiently, determined to give the offender time to repent and he or she does not repent, the innocent party can-

<sup>1</sup> e.g., The idea that all marriages are indissoluble, as I believe the Roman Church teaches, is to my mind unreasonable and superstitious. The only indissoluble marriage is that in which love, at least on one side, continues to exist and act.

not get a divorce because of the time which elapsed before the matter was brought to court. In the eyes of the latter the offence has been condoned. Thus the law works against the Christian desire to give the offender another chance. Moreover, adultery is surely not the prime reason of divorce. Divorce should be *possible* on the grounds of hopeless incompatibility. Obviously the forced continuance of the married state when everything that makes marriage beautiful has departed may involve a greater immorality than divorce ever is.

At the same time the true solution of the problem does not lie either in making divorce easy or in making it difficult. Make it difficult and some unhappy people will break the law and others will chafe under a bondage which they resent. Make it easy and a number of people are loosed on society labelled for ever as divorced persons. It is like discussing, "Shall we lock all insane people up or shall they be loosed on society?" Neither method solves the problem. The solution is to cure mental disease or prevent it. In the matter of divorce one puts little hope in the law. The cure is to show the unhappily married person the cause and if possible the cure of his unhappiness (see p. 63), and better still to prevent unhappiness by the spread of education previous to marriage on all questions which bear upon it.

Here mention may be made of Judge Lindsey's suggestion of companionate marriage. I have read his book carefully,<sup>1</sup> a process which makes clear that he has been very seriously misunderstood and misquoted. No one should criticize his views without first of all making sure that he is not criticizing a travesty of the Judge's position. For instance, the Judge's view is quite different from what is commonly known as "Free Love." Companionate marriage is legal marriage, with legalized birth control, and with the right to divorce by mutual consent for childless couples, usually without payment of alimony.

I feel that the Judge is motivated by an honest desire to

<sup>1</sup> *The Companionate Marriage*, Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans (Brentano's Ltd.), 10s. 6d. See definitions on pp. v, 138-140, 170, *et seq.*

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help society to escape from its troubles, and that he has made a thoughtful contribution towards a solution. He sees how often a hasty marriage follows a mere boy and girl affair and is subsequently found to be unworkable. He sees also how those who slipped into it are held in a grip from which there is no escape without loss of self-respect. His suggestion, as I understand it, is that it would prevent unwise, furtive sex relationships between young folk at one end, or a lifetime of misery, or both, if they were allowed to marry in a legal way, use birth-control devices if they desired to do so, and then, later, do one of two things. If there are any children there is to be no alternative. They must marry finally. If not, they may either voluntarily enter the second married state (family marriage) or they may separate and find fresh mates or remain unmarried. The Judge is quite right in saying that by such a law the number of marriages would increase and the number of divorces and broken homes decrease.

There are many things in favour of such a measure, but to my mind there are three arguments against it which are insurmountable.

The first is that companionate marriage has yet to show that it works; that it is a way through. There is evidence that the escape from convention irks more than the "slavery" of the system replaced. This may be due to custom, but many who have experimented in companionate marriage seem more nerve racked by the new liberty than by the old restraint.

The second is that companionate marriage prolongs the period of uncertainty. The bride, for example, does not know whether her husband will be satisfied with her, or whether, granted that there are no babies, he will cast her away. (And it will be a poor marriage if he only keeps her because the contraceptive has failed to act.) In other words it is like extending the period of engagement and thus the nervous tension (see p. 51) and feeling of uncertainty while yet making physical, psychological and spiritual demands which have no right to be made until the bride's mind is in a state of security.

The third follows from this. Supposing at the end of the companionate period a marriage is dissolved. It does not follow that the bride will be married by anyone else. She is then in the position of a girl whose sex instinct has been aroused and who is then condemned to be unmarried. This seems to me to impose a strain on her which society ought not to sanction. As we have explained (p. 97) the strain on a sexually unawakened woman can be dealt with, but the problem of dealing with her sex nature after it has been aroused and awakened by sex intercourse is a very much more serious problem.

The views of Mrs. Bertrand Russell are different. If I rightly understand her, she would suggest<sup>1</sup> that, as far as marriage goes, life should be divided into three parts. In the first she advises free sex experiments for both sides and advocates the use of birth-control devices. Then she suggests that those who want children should enter monogamous marriage. When the number of required children is complete she recommends a third stage of freedom, with any desired sex experiences, without jealousy on either side. These suggestions, it seems to me, are open to the same or stronger objections than those we have indicated in regard to "Companionate Marriage."<sup>2</sup>

But what positive suggestions are we to make to these negative criticisms? I can only suggest firstly, far-reaching and thorough-going education in all aspects of the sex problem before marriage is entered. Secondly, early marriage, when couples are certain of one another, and the use of contraceptives where necessary, to tide over the economic situation and to space out the family. Thirdly, the lifting up of the whole subject so that its spiritual significance calls out an idealism in those contracting the marriage.

<sup>1</sup> In *The Right to Happiness*.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Kenneth Ingram, in his excellent book *The Modern Attitude to the Sex Problem* (Geo. Allen & Unwin), has examined what might be called the free-love case, and believes it to be psychologically unsound, tending to lower the status of women and the finer qualities of men. (Cf. pp. 28 *et seq.*) I am in entire agreement with his clearly stated arguments. Miss Maude Royden also, in *Sex and Common Sense* (pp. 55 *et seq.*), has some wise and pungent things to say on the same subject.

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In spite of all the problems which call forth suggestions such as those of Judge Lindsey and Mr. and Mrs. Russell, suggestions made in perfectly good faith, monogamous marriage in which children are born, and which is entered into for life, still holds the field as the ideal of the race, an ideal which, when followed, proves itself to bring the greatest happiness to those who contract it, to those born from such a union, and to society in general. I cannot but feel that any lowering of this ideal—or modification of it if the word “lowering” is offensive—would make more problems than it would solve.

Whether we like it or not, whether good reasons for breaking up a marriage exist or not, two people who have been married and who have consummated that marriage can never be as if they had never been married. The union is not only physical, it is psychological and spiritual. The two are one in as intimate a sense as if they were one flesh, and if they are torn asunder they are both wounded even if the wounds are sustained where none ever sees them. Those indeed who bear them, can, if they choose, deny their existence. But the wound of mind and spirit is as real as a wound in the flesh and can be even more disabling.

It may truly be said that many who separate and are granted by law “a judicial separation” do not feel that for them there can ever be re-marriage. It is perhaps due to accident but I set it down here for what it is worth. I have never met a divorced person—with the exception of those who have definitely broken completely away from religious influences—who felt perfectly happy about the divorced state. Those who have spoken to me have always given me the impression that their personality is irreparably damaged, and that they have shunned a task which they felt unable to accomplish and yet which their mind cannot leave alone.

It seems to me a pity that those whose marriage was solemnized in a Church should seek the divorce court before they have sought help in the Church. I know many ministers who have been the means of bringing together a husband and wife in time to save them from divorce, and in time to get them to make a new start and build up what has

afterwards turned out to be an exceedingly happy marriage. Failing the minister—who, by the way, is not nearly so likely to be “shocked” or “innocent” as many people seem to imagine, since he sees more of the seamy side of private lives in six months than most people see in six years—there can be found in every Christian fellowship at least one saint of judgment, experience and insight, who could give helpful advice and see a point of view which neither side can see from within the situation.

“It may safely be asserted,” says Mr. John Coutts,<sup>1</sup> “that with a closer scrutiny of the claims of those who seek the blessing of the Church upon their marriage, with a more faithful use of the Christian methods of reconciliation, penitence and forgiveness between those who err; and with the proper aid of the Christian community exercising its true function as mediator, assessor, and when necessary judge of its members, (divorce) would be practically unknown.”

#### PROSTITUTION

Probably little need be said in a book like this on the subject of Prostitution<sup>2</sup>—by which is meant the submission or use and payment of a woman for the purpose of the gratification of sexual appetite. Few would defend it. Yet some do defend it, and many point to the fact that it is exceedingly widespread and wonder why everyone they meet seems to condemn it outright. They realize that it could not be so widespread if thousands did not support it. If it is so universally condemned by the best members of all civilized states why has society not stamped it out long ago?

The causes of prostitution are nearly all derived from ignorance as to the true nature and significance of sex. A highly-sexed man is refused relations with his wife, possibly

<sup>1</sup> *The Church and the Sex Problem* (James Clarke & Co.), p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> There is an excellent essay on the false standard which condones it in Miss Maude Royden's *Sex and Common Sense* (Hurst & Blackett); cf. also Canon Streeter, *Moral Adventure* (Student Christian Movement Press), pp. 110 et seq.; and *The Relations of the Sexes*, Copec Commission Report, vol. iv, p. 95.

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because he has never understood the art of physical love as set out in Appendix II, or because his wife is frigid, or frightened, or has been so ill-educated in regard to sex that she regards intercourse as "bestly." He feels sex forces at work within him. He has no knowledge of sublimation or of its possibilities. He has never seen sex as a spiritual thing. He has never realized the profound psychological concomitants of the sex act. So, thinking of sex as a physical tension only relieved in a physical way, he either drops into the practice of masturbation or goes to a prostitute. This tension being relieved, he is probably kinder to his wife and more at peace with the world. He stifles his conscience by supposing prostitution a "necessary evil," forgets the woman he has helped to degrade, argues that no assault on her personality has been made because she was willing and well-paid, and goes on his way. So, in a classical passage, Lecky writes in his *History of European Morals*, "There has arisen in society a figure which is certainly the most mournful, and in some respects the most awful, upon which the eye of the moralist can dwell. That unhappy being whose very name is a shame to speak; who counterfeits with a cold heart the transports of affection, and submits herself as the passive instrument of lust; who is scorned and insulted as the vilest of her sex, and doomed for the most part to disease and abject wretchedness and an early death, appears in every eye as the perpetual symbol of the degradation and sinfulness of man. Herself the supreme type of vice, she is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. But for her the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted, and not a few who, in the pride of their untempted chastity, think of her with an indignant shudder, would have known the agony of remorse and despair. She remains while creeds and civilizations rise and fall, the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people."

Another man argues: "I cannot for various reasons be married. The prostitute to whom I go wants my money and **is** quite willing to let me use her body in return. If we both agree, what business is it of anyone else? But for the prostitute I should be tempted to seduce some innocent girl

and get by force what I now get by consent. Prostitution thus safeguards society from sexual offences." With all this many prostitutes would agree.

We shall seek in this section to answer such positions as I have outlined above, if only to provide powder and shot for those who, in mill and factory and warehouse, hear the Christian standards of life continually assailed and are often beaten in argument through not having studied or thought about the matter.

It will readily be seen that no great purpose is served by mere condemnation of prostitution as horrible and revolting. The willingness of the prostitute turns the edge of the argument: "What if it were your sister?" It is, alas, only too easy to lose sight of the facts which make girls into prostitutes, the too-early awakening of the sex-instinct in a passionate girl by some form of sex assault, or the pretence of love on the part of a worthless man, or the falling into the hands of some evil woman or evil gang.<sup>1</sup> The danger of the spread of venereal disease is not strong enough to deter. Venereal disease can be prevented by wearing appliances. It can be cured easily in early stages. In some places prostitutes are continually medically examined, though my medical friends tell me that no examination short of a microscopic examination of vaginal secretion, an examination rarely made, is satisfactory. Further, a prostitute may be medically examined at 9 p.m., become infected at 10 p.m., and pass on the infection at 11 p.m.

Perhaps the strongest argument against prostitution is that it is an injury to the personality of both the contracting parties and that it is never right to inflict an injury on another, even if that other is willing for the injury to be inflicted.<sup>2</sup> Why is it an injury to personality? My answer would be that the symbol of the highest affectionate relation between men and women is robbed of its affectionate and sacramental content and treated as a commercial bargain on

<sup>1</sup> See also the facts on p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> The White Slave Traffic Convention, which came into force in August, 1931, makes the traffic in women and girls, *even with their consent*, a penal offence.

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a physical level involving what cannot really be ignored, the ignoring of the psychological and spiritual concomitants of the act.

I would suggest that no man or woman after prostitution has ever gone to a true mate of the spirit, with feelings of real love and in the bonds of a holy marriage, without feeling that the symbolic act of the union of two personalities has lost something of its bloom and sanctity.

This is true without exception in the case of women. Unfortunately for far too long society has allowed a double standard and has not reviewed the sexual lapses of men as being as serious as those of women. It has been the girl who has "got into trouble." The man, often the greater sinner, has gone scot-free. This state of things is rapidly coming to an end. When it does, men will *feel*—what has always been there, even if unrecognized or buried under pretence—that no sexual physical union except under conditions of true love can be indulged without a wound in the mind, the suffering of which for ever scars, and to some extent disables, the personality.

A good deal goes on, of course, which could not be called prostitution as we have defined it above. There are women who would be indignant if they were labelled prostitutes, yet they are a menace to the community and confront us with the same problem. They do not take money. Instead they take an evening's enjoyment at music-hall or picture-theatre, with a dinner or supper thrown in. In return they offer their bodies. In some ways they are a greater danger than prostitutes. A callow youth with a healthy fear of a prostitute is only too easily lured into vice by such as these. In passing we may note that in many cases whether the man or woman is to blame, or both, well-meaning friends will often seek to force them into marriage. If the two truly love, this may be the best thing to do, but if not it is a doubtful procedure to try to put right the wrong done to the coming child by tying two people who do not love each other in the bonds of matrimony. This may be a case of trying to right one wrong by an even deeper wrong. Again and again a farcical and immoral ceremony has been forced



upon a young girl with the false supposition that thus all the "wrong done to her" is righted, or that by marrying her the man "makes her an honest woman." She then finds herself married to a man of whom the only thing she knows is that he is not to be trusted, or if it be the other way round, a youth finds himself married to a woman concerning whom his main feeling is that he despises her.

The problem can only be adequately met by positive and constructive work. Sex ignorance must be dispelled and replaced by knowledge which makes possible an attitude to sex which, without unduly emphasizing it, regards it as a spiritual and creative force which cannot be degraded without permanent loss to both parties. Further, we must banish the superstition of a double moral standard for men and women, and above all we must take hold in friendship of young people of both sexes and reduce to a minimum those hours of loneliness when sex stimuli from within and without suggest an easy and exciting way of filling life's blanks.

The Copec report on the relation of the sexes gives eight factors which drive women into paid prostitution. The average age of such entry is between sixteen and twenty-one. All the points indicate conditions which Christian and civic influences are seeking to improve. Much yet remains to be done and it may be an incentive to such enterprise if it is realized that it is good preventive work in the matter of prostitution. The eight factors are:

1. Bad or unhappy homes.
2. Unprotected youth.
3. Desire for money.
4. Desire for better clothes as a means of inspiring greater notice or respect.
5. Desire for change or excitement; or indolence and dislike for work.
6. The sense of disgrace and complete catastrophe which a girl is often made to feel keenly if she has been seduced, or has had, or is going to have, an illegitimate child. Such disgrace often entails loss of employment and of character and induces general despair.

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7. The type of character which always tends to take the line of least resistance.

8. The desire for sexual indulgence in those who cannot properly be called defectives.<sup>1</sup>

Of these eight factors I think the sixth is the most productive of prostitution. A girl brought up, as so many are, in complete sex ignorance, is "taken advantage of." She is taught to regard herself as "fallen" and "ruined" though he who caused her condition is often not branded by society at all. Her baby, often greatly loved by its mother, is taken from her and adopted by a "good family." She tends to accept the opinion of society about her, believes her virtue is irretrievably lost, and, friendless and outcast, goes on the streets. In the name of Him who always assessed the sins of the flesh as far less serious than sins of the spirit, and never regarded the sinner against purity as being as sinful as he who sinned against love and perceived truth, as well as in the name of a sane psychology, we must discover ways in which a girl who has made a sex slip can have her self-respect restored and her attitude to life adjusted. As it is, the exaggerated views society holds on sex sins tend to push her into prostitution. Embarking on a life of degradation she may become bitter and cynical and vindictive, obtaining as many men victims as possible out of revenge for her own "fall." Whereupon society views her with disgust but, apart from the Churches, does little to bring her back to a decent citizenship and a redeemed womanhood.<sup>2</sup>

Is it too much to ask even from the Churches which have done so much good rescue work that their "Rescue Homes" should not be ugly houses where hard manual labour is demanded and where, because no beauty dwells, there is an incentive towards excitement, life, and colour? Is it too much to ask that girls from such homes should not be sent into indiscriminate domestic service with a full note of the "case" sent to any mistress who wants a cheap maid? Many

<sup>1</sup> Copec Reports, vol. iv, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> One thinks with joy of the Sisters of the People, all connected with the much maligned Churches, who night after night, and sometimes all night, are busy and successful in bringing the Sisters of the Pavement back to a more worthy womanhood.

homes, of course, are above reproach in this matter. They are well managed and there is brightness and real love awaiting all who enter. On the other hand, many lack both. I know a nice girl with a bonny and loved, though illegitimate, baby boy. The mother was a nurse who was seduced by a doctor. She went to a "home." Her baby was adopted by "respectable people." She had come from a home where was both beauty and culture. She told me how hard it was to visit her wee son and see the filthy way in which he was being kept, and how hard it was to hear from her mistress almost daily, "Now, Miriam, you must be thankful to be in a good home where you can make good. It isn't every mistress who would take a fallen girl into her home." We have a dreary way to go yet before our repellent righteousness becomes like the winsome holiness of Christ.

## CLOTHES

If a beautiful woman came on to a stage completely naked and posed there, her hands clasped behind her head, as I have often seen beautiful Armenian women do on the banks of the Diala river after their ceremonial bathing, there would be nothing indecent in the situation. Indeed in any audience of average Englishmen, feelings of reverence, even of awe, could be called forth. The emotions of many, if they could be analysed, would be found to be emotions of deep wonder and gratitude that God had made so beautiful a thing. There would perhaps be sexual feeling, but not sensual feeling. It would be sexual feeling indistinguishable from a lofty and almost religious æstheticism. Such feeling is often called forth by beautiful music, and is sometimes present in religious experience.

But if that woman made a single gesture of a certain kind, or if a single member of the audience giggled, the whole situation would become indecent.

We see indicated by this that it is not sex which is indecent, but our attitude to it which, if the wrong attitude, may make any fact of sex, or observation of the nude body

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indecent. If we men had a true attitude to sex we should be able to look upon the nude bodies of women with no different feelings than those we have when we see a beautiful face and are simply glad of its beauty. And if women had a true attitude to sex they could do the same in regard to men.

A friend of mine told me that on one occasion he was in a sculpture gallery. He is a man with a great taste for true art and in his own small way a connoisseur of sculpture. The gallery was full of nude figures of beautiful Greek men and women, and he was going from one to the other rejoicing in the consummate skill of the great masters. A party of trippers entered the gallery, both men and women. One of them made some vulgar remark. Others gaped at the figures with half-guilty looks. Some of the women blushed scarlet and with half-suppressed giggles the party left the gallery. My friend said afterwards that he felt hot with shame to think that that place of beautiful art had been made a place of obscenity by what he called their "beastly minds."

But their "beastly minds" to the psychologist are not merely "deplorable." They are to him what loathsome scales on the skin are to the physician: symptoms of an inner disharmony that call for treatment rather than abuse. And one of the tasks of religion and psychology in this generation is to promote a true attitude to sex and rescue it from being thought unclean.

An artist gazes for long periods at a nude person of the opposite sex who poses as his or her model. There are unadjusted people in all professions, but in the main such an artist has no "beastly" feelings. For one thing he is used to it and for another and far more potent reason his attitude is artistic. He is not "gloating" upon her. He is concerned to transmit to his canvas the beauty displayed before him. I have a friend who is an artist's model and who frequently poses in the nude state. She tells me that it is only very exceptionally that she has had any treatment at the hands of artists which was other than chivalrous and gentlemanly. She made two interesting observations. The first was that

when she was treated badly it was always at the hands of elderly men who, brought up in a Victorian atmosphere, had not adjusted themselves to sex as young people are now much more easily adjusted. The second was that she greatly preferred to pose completely naked than to be what she called "dressed."

Doctors and other professional people sometimes examine the areas of the body usually covered by clothing in order to find the symptoms of a disharmony or to treat a condition. They are concerned with physical or psychological problems and their scientific interest minimizes any mere sex interest. Nudity in such cases is merely irrelevant. Of course, if the body were lustfully gazed upon, or if the mind subsequently made imaginative pictures from what had been presented to it for scientific reasons, then morbid results might follow, but any person in the professions referred to above would be hard put to it to get what the Americans call a "sex thrill" in the course of their work just because they are forced to get used to experiences which would have a very different effect on the uninitiated.

This brings us to the discussion of clothing in relation to sex historically. We have not come to wear clothing for reasons of modesty or even for warmth, but for purposes of decoration.<sup>1</sup> To be quite accurate, concealment is a greater incentive to sexual maladjustment and the wrong kind of sex feeling than the complete display of the body would be. A critical period of time for the necessary adjustment would doubtless take place. After that, immorality in thought and deed, and the sexually maladjusted life, would probably be as rare with us as they are amongst completely nude tribes. Prurient curiosity and mental fantasies are enormously intensified by partial concealment. "The beauty of woman's form," says McDougall, "although it greatly adds to its power to excite the sex impulse in man, yet in some obscure way evokes a restraining influence." There are strong æsthetic reasons against nudity and for this reason alone many bodies are better hidden. In our climate there are

<sup>1</sup> See the argument in *The Psychology of Clothes* (International Psycho-Analytical Library), by J. C. Flugel, B.A., D.Sc. (Hogarth Press).

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temperature reasons also, though these could be overcome.<sup>1</sup> From the point of view of ethical, moral, religious and psychological standards there is nothing essentially immoral in the unclothed human body. To state otherwise would surely be an indictment of God who made us as we are. Indeed the modern bathing-pool and craze for sunbaths are healthy tendencies and are not characterized by immorality.

Here I wish to quote some wise words of Mr. E. A. Baughan: "Nudity in revues and musical comedies is rightly suspect. In pieces of that kind, nudity is always presented as a sexual attraction, and not because it may be beautiful or characteristic—in short, artistic. This does not apply only to daring attempts at the 'altogether,' but to the general suggestiveness of scanty and alluring clothing.

"Indeed, absolute nudity is not as indecent as the implications of half-dressed women. And even that physical suggestiveness is not as indecent as the jokes about sexual matters which are in the commonplace of revues and musical comedies. Those jokes are peculiarly the result of prurient and perverted civilization.

"In the main our dislike of showing our bodies is a matter of custom largely due to our climate. We have for generations insisted on covering up our bodies, and we have made an absurd mystery of matters which are not mysterious at all. What we call decency is too often an acknowledgment of our mental indecency."

For support of this point of view look what has happened

<sup>1</sup> Thus a nurse writing in that excellent paper, *The Nursery World*, says: "I have started a few children beautifully fit, but not one to equal this boy. At six months I started the 'hardening,' and from one year old he has had his cold bath and naked crawls and runs, winter and summer. He never sleeps indoors during the day, and the french windows in his night nursery are always wide open with no curtains drawn. The same applies to our day nursery, and I must confess I need to wear a warm coat during meals, while the boy is radiantly warm, although he only wears one layer of Chilprufe and a cotton crawler, with a little cardigan for very cold days. Often I find that people who are in charge of children brought up to those hardening methods consistently do forget that although they (the grown ups) feel the cold the children do not, nor do they need a heap more clothes on when it is just a wee bit colder. This, to my mind, is the danger point in hardening, as the over-clothing causes chills, not the so often blamed air and sunbaths, etc."



in my lifetime. In my boyhood's days if a woman had showed her ankles it would have been considered immodest. If she had shown her calves it would have been thought an outrage. To-day, our girls show their knees to a public, perfectly indifferent, except in the cases of a few morbid perverts or victims of repression, most of them over fifty. Usage has helped to adjust us to sex until it would be impossible to make any normal person sexually excited in this country at the sight of a pair of ankles, and in parenthesis it may be said here that women will be very silly if they let themselves become again tied down to garments which restrict their freedom and put back the march of sexual adjustment. They are much healthier than men, partly because they are not overclad. One wishes it could be made the fashion for men to expose the throat and neck and live in shorts and short-sleeved shirts as we did in the tropics.

It is what is concealed that is sexually exciting, not what is revealed. If women covered their hands for ten years, then the sight of a naked hand would arouse lustful thoughts just as in China now, where women cover their feet, the sight of a naked foot is "indecent." Progress will probably mean gradually wearing less and less clothes both for the sake of health and of morals.

My wife and I have lived in the East and have often compared notes on this matter. When, for the first time, an Indian man-servant, wearing only a small loin-cloth, brought up her bath-water her Western attitude to things caused her to have a mild shock, and I registered the same type of reaction in parts of India where girls and women frequently wear nothing above the waist. But it can honestly be said that this passes in half a dozen weeks into the attitude we have to our own people in England; one of æsthetic joy if they are beautiful and the opposite if they are ugly.

Let me add to that an experience I have often wanted to put on record. I was once an officer in the Mess of a British regiment whose duty included looking after forty thousand Armenian refugees. Their women would be called by some immodest. If they are drying themselves after a bathe, many will not even turn round or make any attempt at

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concealment, even while a whole regiment passes by. I have marched with them when this has been the case. Scholars tell me that the classics contain references to the "immodesty" of Armenian women. Moreover we had few nurses. British Tommies had to turn into hospital orderlies. Women patients had to be washed and nursed. Confinements had to be attended to. If this were the place I could tell many stories, amusing and pathetic, of those stern days of war. The point I want to make is that with incredible speed those men adjusted themselves to a new order of things and a new way—forced by circumstances upon them—of looking upon nudity. And all the time I was with the regiment not a single case of immorality occurred nor was there a case of indecency reported to headquarters.

If it is supposed that nudity leads to immorality we have only to take note of the fact that the naked races of the world are not, for the most part, immoral sexually, and that, among many of them, what we call immorality is unknown. I am not surprised at R. L. Stevenson's outcry, and that of many others, against the enthusiasm of missionaries to clothe primitive races among whom they have worked. All that was achieved by this was to infect them with the "beastliness" of our own sex maladjustments.

What can we do now? We can teach and preach sex as a beautiful natural creative energy. We can teach facts about it as unemotionally and with as little embarrassment as we teach other facts. We can especially teach children so that their attitude to their sex organs and those of the other sex is no different from their attitude to any other organs or functions of the body. We can let them bathe together unclad so that they get used to the bodies of one another, explaining the differences to them if, and when, they ask questions.

We are wisely proceeding in the direction of a greater freedom in this matter. Perhaps if we put away our silly sense of shame and our musty ideas of decency, society can be purged of its stupid sex maladjustment and our children grow up in a new clean world, where sex is that beautiful, holy thing God meant it to be.

## PLAYS, FILMS AND NOVELS

There are some plays, films and novels which affect certain people powerfully in the matter of sexual excitement. These are especially the heavily repressed, the "idle rich," the highly-sexed, the anæmic, the men and women who habitually eat too much and whose diet contains alcohol, much meat and highly-spiced foods, and the weary, whose work leaves them with no energy left for artistic or intellectual sublimations. One is forced to the conclusion that those who stage certain plays, and revues, exhibit certain films, and publish certain novels, are aware of the inherent "sex appeal" and rely on the response of human nature, especially unadjusted human nature, for the success which is sure to follow. One rather dull play with a certain *risqué* and suggestive act in it turned out to be a dead failure for a whole week in a certain northern city. The producers then hit on the idea of advertising it as, "The Play the Censor almost Banned." During the second week the house was full each night. Another play was advertised as, "The Play that Shocked London."

The films are subjected now to a censorship which holds the balances very well, and on the whole the cinema is becoming a real asset to the community. It is entertaining, educative, really funny, and it brings a sense of colour into millions of drab lives. Observations would lead me to suggest that in the smaller picture theatres in the back streets of big cities films are shown which are an incitement to crime and to sexual passion, but I am informed by responsible officials of the cinema industry<sup>1</sup> that the posters libel the films shown. If this is so it is still no credit to the cinema

<sup>1</sup> I stated in my pulpit on one occasion that hoardings outside small theatres suggested that sexually exciting films were being shown. The Chairman of the Watch Committee, an ex-Lord Mayor of Leeds, publicly endorsed my statements, as did some sections of the Press. The Leeds and District Branch of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association sent me a resolution "strongly resenting" my remarks, but the Film Critic of a London daily of April 2nd, 1931, himself wrote: "For the moment we are faced with a flood of salacious films"; cf. the valuable report of the Birmingham Cinema Enquiry Committee.

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industry that such posters should be shown, and I notice that Mr. Hugh Redwood, the religious editor of the *News Chronicle*, in his book *God in the Slums*,<sup>1</sup> says, "The boys of the slums are wonderful training material for good or evil. They are children in their love of pictures and music. Hollywood's worst in the movie line has recruited hundreds of them for the gangs of race-course roughs, motor bandits, and smash-and-grab thieves." The low tone of the film whose main interest is some aspect of the sex problem worked out on a plane of vulgarity and suggestiveness is even more dangerous and takes its toll of the personal purity of thousands.

Novels vary, but there can be little doubt that they are as great sinners in the matter of arousing unhealthy sex feeling as plays and films. Opinion must differ vastly. For instance if I had been a censor I should never have banned *The Well of Loneliness* by Miss Radclyffe Hall. A friend lent it to me and I read it, and thought it a beautiful book, written with great artistic skill. In my view there is not a morbid or unhealthy line in it. On the other hand had I been a censor I should have banned a novel written some years ago by an ex-missionary of the Church of England, which, among other things, described—as I thought rather gloatingly—a scene in the inside of a brothel in which an army chaplain played a part.

Opinions differ, but it may be said in passing that in all these things we need a censorship with a deeper psychological insight. For instance a censor will ban a display of bare limbs when the setting makes them purely artistic and beautiful. He will allow a piece of suggestive dialogue full of coarse jokes and suggestive innuendoes to go through. He does it by the crude criterion that bare limbs are indecent, but all depends on the ensemble and I should submit that suggestive dialogue is much more indecent than bare limbs in an artistic setting.

What then shall we do about plays, films and novels? The answer can only be that every man must judge for himself. If he finds that witnessing plays and films or reading novels

of a certain kind makes the mastery of his sex life a more difficult business, he will, if he is wise, either set himself the task of self-adjustment, which is by no means as easy as it sounds, or he will cut them out altogether. It must frankly be admitted that morbid practices such as masturbation have often been begun not so much by plays, novels and cinemas themselves, as by that trick of the mind by which a scene on the stage or screen or in a novel is reproduced when the mind is not busy with other things, and gloated over, sexual feelings meanwhile being encouraged and lewd images welcomed into the mind. Undoubtedly the quickest way to deal with such a matter is to cut occasions of sex-excitement right out.

What are parents to do if their children wish to see a certain play or film, or read a certain novel?

I think it may truly be said that children ideally educated in sex matters will take no harm, whatever they see or whatever they read. Such young folk have an amazingly sensitive method of finding their own way in such matters. They are far more discriminating than their parents generally imagine and have a true distaste for what is really unclean.

I want to add that in my opinion such discrimination is more aided by liberty than by restraint. Once say, "You must not go to see that play or film," or "You must not read that novel," and young people are filled with an overwhelming curiosity and an urge to do the thing they are commanded not to do.

To parents in difficulty I would certainly suggest that they keep books of which they disapprove out of the way of their children, and if the latter want to see doubtful plays and films, it is often enough to say, "Oh, I'll take you to a really good show, better than —." They must make sure they fulfil their promise. If, on the other hand, they perceive that their child's mind is set on a certain play or film or novel, it is a good plan to go with them, or read it with them and *talk the matter out*, relying on their parental training and their own scale of values to react as their parents would have them react. I have known of such an experiment leading a youth of sixteen to rise in his place in a theatre and

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say, "Come on, Dad, I've seen enough of this." Such a reaction is far better in its effects than a prohibition. The latter so often leads to a furtive attendance at theatre or picture-palace or the secret reading of a book followed by no open discussion, followed by forfeiture of a child's fellowship and confidence, and perhaps by morbid brooding.

#### DANCING

There can be no reasonable doubt, I think, that originally dancing was a preliminary to the short courtships of primitive days, and was looked upon as a preparation for sexual intercourse. The toning-up of the physical organism by exercise, the propinquity of the other sex, the contact of bodies, in those days naked, no doubt led to sexual excitement and intercourse.

Indeed in modern days dancing together frequently leads to marriage. Havelock Ellis tells us<sup>1</sup> that in connection with the International Congress of Dancing Masters held at Barcelona in 1907, Girandet, president of the International Academy of Dancing Masters, issued an inquiry to three thousand teachers of dancing throughout the world in order to find out how often dancing led to marriage. Of over one million pupils of dancing either married or engaged to be married, it was found that in most countries more than 50 per cent met their conjugal partners at dances. The lowest figure was 39 per cent and the country was Norway. The highest was 97 per cent and the country was Germany. England's figure was 67 per cent. Of the teachers themselves, 92 per cent met their partners at dances.

The fact that sex desire is stimulated and to some extent satisfied by the dance would seem to be supported by the fact that both men and women are generally less keen on dancing after marriage in which they find sexual gratification in a biological way.

To remark on this origin of dancing is not, however, to condemn the modern dance. I would personally encourage dancing in these days since I regard it as a way in which the

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 56.

sex instinct may be sublimated. At its best it is what all true sublimations are, an unconscious sublimation. I think it is only in unusually highly-sexed or abnormal people that dancing is consciously erotic, unless indeed the partner sets himself or herself to call out sex feeling of an unhealthy type. Dancing is to be commended, not only because it is splendid exercise and because it helps towards beauty of carriage and deportment, but because, in that it is a recognized and legitimate form of social intercourse between the sexes, it gives young people of both sexes an outlet for sex expression without its sexual nature becoming conscious.

The original *raison d'être* of the dance may have been largely sexual, but probably had æsthetic values also even in primitive times. Many psychologists express the view that a great deal of artistic work, painting and artistic handwork, was begun by primitive individuals who for various reasons were denied marriage and who found in art a way of expressing the creative powers denied their biological outlet. For this reason artistic creative work is a good sublimation now, as we have pointed out in chapter VII. Many teachers of dancing and their pupils do sincerely feel that their dancing is a creative expression of the sense of the beautiful within them. At the same time there is a great diversity of movements all covered by the word dancing. If dancing stirs conscious sex desire it should be cut out.

#### HOUSING AND INDUSTRIALISM

"The citizen of the Kingdom," writes Rev. Dr. Herbert Gray,<sup>1</sup> "will find himself involved in the housing question. The houses in which a vast number of people live in this country are such as to deprive them of the possibility of a full human life. They are fatal to real health, fatal to quiet, almost fatal to cleanliness. They make a mother's task too hard for even the strongest of women. They rob fathers of a real resting-place in the evenings. They provide no opportunity of social intercourse for the young. In many cases they make even decency cruelly difficult. Christ's

<sup>1</sup> In *The Christian Adventure* (S.C.M.), p. 41.

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people cannot accept them for any portion of God's family. Building the Kingdom must mean rebuilding a vast proportion of the houses of Great Britain." These words are well and truly written. Perhaps it is worth saying, however, that in relation to sex, the problem is not so much due to the overcrowding as to the drab conditions. "Adolescents from the slums know everything about sex," said a welfare worker to me. And though for a thousand reasons we must work for better housing conditions, the familiarity of many slum-dwellers with facts which are concealed in better class homes carries with it a certain amount of immunity from moral danger, especially the dangers and repressions consequent on the taboo on sex.

A nurse friend of mine tells me of four families in four rooms where young people of both sexes live and sleep together. They undress in front of one another, watch each other bathe, and many of them have been present at both the conception and birth of younger brothers and sisters, for the simple reason that there is nowhere else for them to be. Immorality is not common amongst them, for the same reason that some savage tribes are as moral as any people on earth<sup>1</sup>; there is nothing hidden, and they become used to experiences which are only sexually rousing to those who are unaccustomed to them. What does lead to sexual immorality is rather the longing for excitement, for life and colour.

The same applies to the industrial conditions under which many work. I can see now in imagination a printer whom I once watched at work. His particular machine was down in a cellar, reached by a narrow wooden stair. A dim, green, thick sheet of glass above his head was on the pavement level of the street above. The light it gave was, of course, negligible. The air it gave was nil since it did not open. He saw to do his work by a broken mantle, a foot from his face, which appeared to give off more fumes than light. His job appeared to be to feed a machine with piece after piece of paper. So, it appears, our advertisement bills are printed. Hungrily the roaring, grinding machine, like an evil, sentient monster, grabbed the bill he gave it, printed

<sup>1</sup> See p. 156.



it, and flapped it on to a wooden receiver on the farther side. One got the impression that it would like to have grabbed him and carried him into its voracious, never-satisfied mouth. Fancy, of course! But for many a night I could see in my dreams his pale face, unnaturally whitened by that fuming gas-light, bending over the monster he tended, feeding it hour after hour, hour after hour. . . .

I talked to that man. There was no complaint. With two million unemployed a man was glad to have a job at all. There were hours of escape. . . .

Thousands of our fellows, I suppose, in spite of the factory inspectors and the undoubted advance in our day of industrial conditions, live and work in dark, evil-smelling, often verminous holes. What wonder then if there is a craving for excitement! A man, highly-sexed, in such conditions. A girl, highly-sexed, in such conditions. The urge of the instinct, the reaction from cooped up conditions; the desire for passionate adventure and the thrill of romance on one side; the loneliness, the longing for pretty clothes and a lover on the other. What wonder then if both fall to sex temptation and lives are spoilt and the vicious circle of bad conditions closes round them both and holds them down. We are ready enough to talk of "fallen women"; more ready than we used to be to blame equally the man who made them fall; not unwilling to support measures and open rescue homes to lift them up. But how slow to stamp out evil conditions so disposing to immorality! How slow to learn that prevention is better than cure!

#### ALCOHOL

One of the most dangerous factors which lead to sexual downfall is alcohol. In relation to the sex problem one fact is indisputable. It is that the drinking of alcohol heightens sexual desire and lowers control. One illustration of the way in which alcohol slows down our control-reactions is as follows. If you are driving a motor-car along a road and a child rushes out on to it, the time between your seeing the child and your applying the brake is, in normal cases, one-

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fifth of a second. After one glass of whisky and soda that reaction time is four-fifths of a second. Just the difference between an incident and an accident. In a word the alcohol, even in small quantities, has lowered the power of control. It cannot be doubted that in sex temptation alcohol similarly lowers control and at the same time excites desire. How many men, decent enough fellows, have gone down into the hell of sexuality because drink has destroyed self-control? How many girls have been plied with liquor till they have not known what was happening, and have wakened to find themselves plundered of purity? In a very high percentage of lives spoilt by sexual immorality, including prostitution, the evil began through the unwise drinking of alcoholic liquor. Dr. Douglas White told the Commission on Venereal Disease that about 80 per cent of venereal patients confessed that they were under the influence of alcohol when they acquired the infection.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from K. L. and W. F. Lofthouse, *Purity and Racial Health* (Epworth Press), p. 141.

## HEALTHY-MINDEDNESS

*"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are gracious . . . think on these things."—ST. PAUL.*

HAPPY are those men and women who have grown up under home conditions which have made it possible, and in some cases even easy, for them to adjust themselves to sex as each phase of life has come to them involving its own particular problems. Their questions have been frankly answered in a way which satisfied their minds when those questions were asked. They have no unhealthy curiosities and are neither immodest on the one hand nor prurient on the other. Sex to them is, and has always been, a beautiful and holy and entirely natural thing. They have achieved the mastery of sex.

This ideal we must hold before us in order that we may make it the actual for our children. To this end we may well take to heart some words of a Wimpole Street specialist.<sup>1</sup> "We should most of us agree nowadays that the child has got to have his questions answered when he asks them; that they must be answered truthfully, and that he should not be told more than he asks. The child who is taught in this way will know that he can always go to his informant when he wants more knowledge and that he will always get a true answer." As to who should give this instruction Dr. Rees thinks the parents are the ideal directors unless they are too embarrassed or have mishandled their own sex life. In the case of a fatherless boy he adds: "No boy approaching puberty or adolescence should really be talking to women about these very intimate matters, it tends to keep up the 'mother dependent' attitude." One presumes the same may be adduced in the case of the motherless girl. Some substituted person must then be found. In no case are we to make a solemn occasion of sex instruction. "There are few methods

<sup>1</sup> From a lecture on the Sex Education of Children, delivered at the Health and Empire Summer School, August, 1927, by Dr. J. R. Rees.

of sex instruction so harmful as those which savour of an initiation ceremony. . . . The child who meets in its parents this idea of a mysterious secret into which he is going to be led bit by bit will not unnaturally get the idea that sex is a mystery, dangerous, and quite apart from all the other ordinary healthy natural affairs of life. Most of the fears and wrong ideas about sex that one discovers in the adult are linked up with some initiation idea of this kind, either pleasant or unpleasant in early life."

The matter is more difficult in the case of adults whose attitude to sex has not been naturally and truly formed by parents wisely advised by suggestions similar to those made above. They may have to spend a good deal of time and thought in adjusting themselves. They may even be compelled to get competent psychological advice. Or, on the other hand, sex may have ceased to trouble them and leave them free from any trouble caused through repression. As long as their peace is not that of the ostrich with its head in the sand they have only to leave well alone.

Those who are deeply worried or obsessed by sex problems cannot leave their problem there. They feel unadjusted and indeed tormented in various ways. No method of evading the subject can help them. All we can do here is to lay down certain great principles:

1. There is a way *through* the problem; it must be neither evasion nor obsession, but a way right through to the healthy-minded state on the other side. There is a way through *for all*.

2. There is nothing inherently unclean or disgusting in sex, and there are no *facts* capable of inducing torment of the mind. It is better to know all than to half-know, to "know" what is false or inaccurate, or to be worried by complete ignorance.

3. Accept yourself as a person having a sex instinct. "To know yourself," say Dr. McDougall, "is the first rule of mental hygiene," and no one knows himself who pretends he has no sex instinct or who turns away from it in disgust.

4. Realize to what a large extent our natural reticence about sex and the Victorian conspiracy of silence on the

matter have surrounded it with artificial feelings of "guilt" which are not natural to a God-given instinct and which make difficult the true attitude to it. For instance physical sex-desire is no more "wrong" than hunger at dinner-time, yet thousands of people despise themselves and feel "guilty" because such desires come to them.

5. At the same time there is sex indecency about. Any instinct, however clean inherently, can be made the occasion of filth. We must fight a battle here. I quote some words from Sir William Joynson Hicks when, as Home Secretary, he was approached on the subject of indecent literature by the London Public Morality Council. "If you will only in your churches, chapels, pulpits, and Sunday schools, deal with this matter openly and frankly, and get the parents to realize it is their duty to do their utmost to keep these things (indecent sex appeals) out of reach of our young children and get the pure tone to the minds of the children, you will do more than I can."

A word may be added about the temptations of a place of business. I suppose it will be freely admitted that in the majority of businesses there is a certain traffic in dirty stories. I want to make a special appeal to senior men and women who are in charge of offices or workrooms or who, if not in charge, have much influence. Probably you have become hardened and these stories fall from you like water off a duck's back, or you are married and the temptations of youth are leaving you. Will you as Christian men and women put yourself in the place of young boys and girls, fresh from home and school, who come into such an office or workroom? Imagine it is your boy or girl. With a little imagination you can realize that that youngster will lie awake at night and think of that story, and you know what may so easily happen. Will every man and woman who reads this agree in the Name of Christ to protect others against the dirty story? For what we must do is make goodness and purity as popular as vice and smut. Youngsters listen and laugh and are drawn into impurity because it is so desperately hard to appear "pi" or "goody-goody" or to be different from other people, but if one senior in the office

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would fly the flag of Christ many a youngster would be only too glad to rally to the standard. It is desperately hard to be good by yourself.

Another thing in relation to business. Girl clerks and typists have told me how hard it is to work for certain employers. I wish their stories were more rare. My experience as a confidant of hundreds of young people has told me that these happenings are only too common. Recently three girls, not as it happens in Leeds, have told me how in one case a manager, in another a partner in the firm, and in the third, a doctor, indecently molested them. One girl protested very definitely. "All right," said the manager, "I don't want goody-goodies working for me. If you are going to be so particular you can leave." You can see the dilemma which faced her; either she must submit to indecent mauling, or, in days when it was so desperately hard to get another job, she must throw the job up. Of course there is one way out. She can write to the directors when she is threatened with dismissal and explain to them why she is being discharged, but even if she does this she will probably find that everyone is leagued against her. We shut a man up in prison for forging a cheque, but that seems to me a clean thing compared with the offensive trick of this blackmailing cad. Passions are roused and evil practices begin. Perhaps I need not ask any employer who happens to read these words to treat a girl as he would like his daughter to be treated.

6. In the work of sexual readjustment which lies before us there is a great place for the activities of the Christian Church. We who love the Church, who *are* the Church, must pray and work and love and speak out until we have encompassed all the forces of evil, until all men and women have enough to live on, and to make for themselves homes, which, however humble, are real sanctuaries; to develop the healthy body, which makes so much easier the development of the healthy mind, and to bring about a state of things where all labour is regarded as service to the community—not slavery for a self-appointed demigod—service held to be honourable whatever its nature, paid for adequately and carried out under conditions which enable both men and



women to preserve their dignity and status as sons and daughters of God. And, incidentally, none of us has the right to possess anything if the sacred rights of personality have been violated before it could be put into our hands.

In regard to sex, one last word in conclusion. You may include necessary knowledge and exclude that which is evil. You may purify "art" and "literature." You may protect against "smut" in business and professional life and even stamp it out. You may overcome the evils of alcohol, slums, and industrial conditions. But all these together will not make the mind of man healthy nor his soul pure. They will greatly help. They are the concern of all Christians. But they have never yet, in one single instance, made one heart holy or clean.

Let me conclude with the word that matters most. We must confront men with Jesus. Christianity might well be called a gospel for it has good news indeed. The news of a Friend whose friendship two thousand years ago changed men's lives. How? Simply by friendship, by His being with them, loving them with a love for them and a belief in them and a patience with them that never let them go.

They became changed. A crusty customs' clerk became Saint Matthew and a quick-tempered fisherman Saint Peter. The same men, the same personalities; but saying things, doing things, being things, which were quite beyond them until they became His friends.

What happened was that in fellowship with Him they caught His spirit. It infected them, possessed them, empowered them, manifested itself in them, was alive in them for ever, even after His earthly body had passed from sight of men.

It is the faith of all the Churches that His spirit still lives, still loves, still cleanses, still empowers all those who seek His fellowship. Some find Him in the sacrament and some in the hush of a Church service. Some find Him in great music and true art. Some find Him breaking through to them in the wonder of a summer dawn, in "the silence that is in the starry sky," amid the mist of bluebells in a wood, in the majesty of a starlight night, in the glory of a

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sunset, or in the fret of waves that lave with silent tide a lonely shore. Some find Him in words that have been written about Him by His friends. Some find Him near them in the love of a woman, or as they hush a little child to sleep, or in service to His little brothers. But all who really find Him, find that a new life begins for them and a fount of pure and living water is unsealed within them.

Outside the window where I am writing this is a lilac bush. A few weeks ago it seemed dead; so black, so dull and dirty with a city's grime and smoke. But as I write, it is green with a new-born loveliness and clothed with the purity of fragrant flowers. As I gaze at it, it flashes to me its secret. It has yielded to the friendship of the spring, and the hidden life within it is called into activity, power and loveliness.

I have written much of psychology and of sex; too little, perhaps, of religion.<sup>1</sup> If I have made this mistake let me at least add this last word. There is no man or woman living, however beset with temptation, disaster, even despair, whom Christ will not receive whom He will not understand, whom He cannot save. His friendship has meant for thousands of men and women, sore beset by the problems of sex, peace and a clean mind at His side.

It may be necessary for us to know the facts about sex and to understand our own psychology. I think it is. But if we are looking for "power to become," no mere knowledge of a situation can supply it, however essential to true harmony and well-being that knowledge may be. But He can supply it. In the days of His flesh His friendship changed men's lives. Unless the Church in all its branches is sadly mistaken; unless the saints were deluded; unless the lives of the world's purest and best are based on illusion, that friendship is still available. Still He calls, not for mental adherence to a creed, nor the elaboration of intricate organization, nor the carrying out of a ritual, but to a new Way of Life, to a Love that has power to make us pure; to a Friendship capable of making us what we most want to be. In that Way we can find liberty. In that Love we can find reality. In that Friendship we can find peace.

<sup>1</sup> See *The Transforming Friendship* and *Jesus and Ourselves*.

THE PHYSICAL FACTS<sup>1</sup>

*"Undoubtedly the best way to achieve a happy, well-balanced sex life is to learn all the facts of sexual anatomy and physiology in youth, long before they have any individual or emotional importance to the learner."*—DR. HELENA WRIGHT, *The Sex Factor in Marriage*, p. 25.

No book which sets out to help people to master their sex life can neglect to provide accurate information about the sex organs of both sexes. Ignorance begets fear and curiosity here as elsewhere, and a clear idea of the nature and function of the sex organs is essential. Such knowledge as is required is not, of course, the kind of detailed knowledge required by the student of anatomy. All that is required is an untechnical, but not thereby inaccurate, idea of sex physiology sufficient for the practice of sex hygiene and the banishment of worry. Let it be remembered, as this chapter is opened, that it is only our ancient taboos which make such a discussion as follows different in any way whatsoever from a discussion of the nature and functions of the heart. In the sight of God one part of the body does not differ from another in shamefulness and need not be spoken about with any greater feeling of embarrassment. Both embarrassment and shame are out of place, and as we escape from the clutches of sex taboos both will fall away.

*The Male Sex Organs*

These consist of the scrotum in which are contained the two testicles, and the penis or organ for the introduction of the spermatozoa into the female. We shall now describe these parts.

The scrotum is a loose, dependent pouch or sac of skin hanging from the bottom of the abdomen between the thighs. It has a middle partition. The testicles are two small oval bodies carried in the scrotum, one on either side

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is based on notes specially written for this book by Dr. Greaves.

of the partition. The testicles are complicated organs, the main function of which is the manufacture of spermatozoa, or male life cells, or more simply, sperms. During sexual excitement these sperms are conveyed in a milky fluid along two sperm-ducts or canals which pass behind the groin on either side and then into the lower part of the abdomen where they join the passage from the bladder (urethra) which runs through the penis, the principal male sexual organ.

The penis is an elongated organ, normally soft and dependent, composed of fibrous tissue with large blood-vessels. At the end is the sensitive portion known as the glans, covered at birth by the attached and reflexible foreskin. Sometimes this foreskin is long and dirt accumulates beneath it. It should always be pulled back in bathing this part. Sometimes it is tight, and rubbing against the glans produces sex excitement. For these reasons it is often removed in infancy, leaving the glans uncovered. This removal, a simple surgical operation, is called circumcision. If the rubbing of the foreskin continually causes excitement it is well to have this operation done even after maturity is reached.

The skin covering the scrotum and penis is sexually sensitive, the most sensitive part being the tip of the glans. These are the only erogenous zones<sup>1</sup> in the normal male. When sex excitement occurs, the penis, which is surrounded by spongy erectile tissue, becomes, through a greatly increased filling up of the blood-vessels, hard, erect and solid. From being limp and hanging, it is erected and stands out by itself, pointing upwards at an angle with the body which corresponds with the angle of the female opening. It is ideal that such erection should only occur as a preliminary to sexual intercourse. Yet no alarm should be felt if it occurs in erotic or sexual dreams. It also occurs, in response to sex excitement, in waking life and is brought about by erotic scenes described in novels or on the films or the stage. It is also brought about by handling and rubbing the organ.

<sup>1</sup> Erogenous zones are bodily areas, the stimulation of which can cause sex excitement.

This latter is termed masturbation or self-abuse and is dealt with in chapter VIII.

### *The Female Sex Organs*

The female organs are more complex and it makes for simplicity to divide them into those inside the abdomen and those external to it.

The internal sex organs are the uterus or womb, the ovaries, one on either side of the womb, and between the womb and each ovary a canal or duct called the Fallopian tube. We shall describe these organs separately.

The womb or uterus is a small triangular organ, normally about three inches by two, placed centrally in the pelvis or lower part of the abdomen. It is hollow, but the normal cavity is very small. Both the walls, which are made of muscle and are about an inch in thickness, and the cavity, are capable of enormous distension during pregnancy since this small organ has to house the body of the growing baby until birth.

The ovaries or egg-bearing organs are oval inch-long bodies about three inches to either side of the womb. They contain the ova or egg-cells which, fertilized by the male sperm-cells, form the foetus or embryo child which, nine months after fertilization, is born into the world. An ovum is  $\frac{1}{128}$  inch in diameter. A sperm is  $\frac{1}{800}$  inch in length. Neither, of course, can be seen by the naked eye.

When a girl arrives at puberty, at varying intervals and one at a time, an egg-cell emerges from the thousands in the ovary through the wall of the latter and is caught by the tiny tentacles that grow at the end of the Fallopian tubes. These tentacles direct the egg-cell down the Fallopian tubes and by the rhythmic contractions of these tubes the egg-cell passes into the uterus or womb. If, in the womb, the egg-cell is fertilized by a male sperm, a child may begin to grow there. If not, the egg-cell passes through the womb and through the vagina, or canal, which connects the womb with the exterior of the body, and no reproduction takes place.

Turn now to the external female sex organs. Externally, between the legs, the female has two folds of soft tissue on

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either side known as the greater and lesser lips (*labia majora* and *labia minora*). They might better be called the outer and inner lips. If the outer lips are separated, the inner lips are seen immediately below them. If these again are separated then low down towards the anus is found the entrance to the vagina, already described as the passage leading from the lips to the womb. The word vagina gets its name because it is like a sheath into which the penis or male organ tightly fits. The length of the vagina averages about three inches. The womb projects somewhat into the vagina. This projection is known as the cervix or neck of the womb, the orifice of which is continuous with the cavity of the womb itself. This cervix is capable of opening more widely and of exerting spasmodic or sucking movements upon the glans of the male penis when the latter is pushed to the end of the vagina, and this movement of the cervix gives to the female a sense of erotic pleasure during the act of sexual intercourse.

Between the vagina opening in the inner lips and the cervix, is the membrane called the hymen. It is often supposed that the hymen stretches like the skin of a drum right across the passage. This is not so. If it were, menstruation could not take place. Sometimes the hymen is tight but perforated, and sometimes it is more like the detached neck of a child's balloon and amounts merely to a narrowing of the vaginal passage. During the first few acts of sexual intercourse, unless the hymen has been stretched previously<sup>1</sup> it often tears and slightly bleeds. This accounts for the discharge of blood which has so often terrified the youthful uninstructed bride. It is sometimes supposed that unless there is bleeding at first intercourse the bride is not a virgin and has had intercourse before. Girls in whom the hymen is not intact have often been accused of having had intercourse. This is very unjust and unsound. In some girls the hymen is so delicate a structure that the stretching apart of the thighs will tear the hymen. The use of the fingers in scratching at some moment of irritation, or during masturbation, might tear it. On the other hand in some women it

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II, on Physical Factors in Married Happiness.

is so strong that the male organ cannot penetrate the vagina. Nevertheless it has been known for a woman to bear a child and yet for the hymen to be unbroken. The knowledge of these facts would have saved many women and men from unnecessary worry and unjustifiable reproach both given and accepted.

At the top of the inner lips is a small structure called the clitoris. In many ways it resembles a miniature penis. It is capable of erection and then becomes like the stump end of a whist-card pencil. It is protected by a covering called the prepuce which is attached to the join of the inner lips. Its function is to provide sex sensation and this seems to be its only use, but it is very important because of the acuteness of the sensations which can be caused through it. Psychically it is connected with the other erogenous zones of the female body, and especially with two small glands, one on either side of the vagina. These are called Bartholin's glands. When the clitoris is stimulated, Bartholin's glands exude a mucous lubricant which oils and bathes all the sexual parts ready for the reception of the penis. Ideally the clitoris should only be stimulated by sexual intercourse or by the love-play preliminary to it, but it is often stimulated by sex excitement induced in other ways like those noticed on p. 172, such as erotic dreams or handling and touching. The male is much more easily stimulated to sexual desire. The touch or even the appearance of an attractive woman, a sexual book, play or picture, may be enough to cause stimulation. In the female, courtship and caresses are usually required. Some women, however, are more consciously sexed than others, and the preliminary stages of courtship may arouse sexual desire, others may go as far as consummation without experiencing this; but it cannot be too clearly understood that the ability to experience passion coupled with tenderness from a beloved mate, without desiring to make any physical response, is abnormal and pathological. Whenever sex excitement occurs Bartholin's glands discharge mucus. Knowledge of this fact would have saved many uninstructed girls and women from fear lest the discharge, which may wet the thighs and cause some dis-

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comfort, should be a symptom of disease, venereal or otherwise.

The breasts should be recognized as part of the female sexual apparatus. At puberty—the time of first menstruation, and the time when hair begins to appear in the armpits and on the lower abdomen—the breasts swell and enlarge, and the nipple, one of the erogenous zones of the female body,<sup>1</sup> becomes sensitive and capable of erection ready for the lips of the future child. It is enough of warning to say that after puberty the stimulation of the nipples with the fingers is often enough to cause sex excitement with the corresponding discharge in Bartholin's glands. The breasts are greatly influenced by changes in the ovaries and womb, and pain in the breasts during or just before menstruation should not be allowed to cause alarm.

### *Menstruation*

The first indication of sexual maturity in the female is the appearance of menstruation at the age of puberty, normally anything from 12–16, although it may be earlier or later. This is a monthly outpouring of blood and mucous membrane from the womb—supposedly a preparation for the reception of the fertilized ovum—which normally lasts about five days, and should not be accompanied by pain. In past years menstruation has unfortunately been regarded not as a natural event, but as an illness. Schoolgirls have been expected to feel ill, and to have pain, in fact the polite synonym for menstruation is “being unwell.” Under these conditions dysmenorrhœa or painful menstruation of all degrees of intensity has been the rule rather than the exception, often accompanied by headache and vomiting. Nowadays it is fortunately regarded in a more common-sense light, and researches lately conducted by the Medical Women's Federation have shown that in schools where ordinary exercise, baths, etc., are not interfered with during the period, dysmenorrhœa is a fast-disappearing bogey. Aperients should be taken if required, games should be

<sup>1</sup> An “erogenous zone” is one, the touching and caressing of which is capable of causing sexual excitement.



played as usual. A normal number of hot baths is helpful and generally a healthy disregard of the process is desirable. Swimming is, of course, impossible for æsthetic reasons, but no activity need be interfered with on other grounds.

Menstruation ceases about the age 45-50. The cessation is known as the menopause, climacteric, or change of life. It is unfortunately regarded as an illness, and many women expect (and by expecting frequently obtain) a period of ill-health, both physical and mental. It should, on the contrary, be regarded as a natural process and not be accompanied by ill-health. Atrophy or shrinking of the sex organs occurs, and sexual desire may go, but this is variable. Probably the most natural process is for interests gradually to transfer themselves to other pursuits. It needs to be emphasized that only if there is actual physical disease need there be physical illness at this time, and only if there is psychological trouble need there be mental symptoms such as depression, irritability and so on.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, while women are now consciously emancipated, and valued apart from their power to have children, the unconscious part of their minds is not thus emancipated. At the climacteric, therefore, the "unconscious" is saying to them, if one may so put it, "Your value in the world is diminished for you can no longer do what women were created to do, namely, have children." From this sense of frustration in the unconscious, there may bubble up into consciousness feelings of depression and irritability often not understood. In women of warm affection who have never had a child, these feelings can cause much distress. To understand their cause and try to dismiss them by acting as though they were absent is about as much help as one can offer. Several years may pass before symptoms of "flushing," "shivering" and vague distress pass away. Depression in the early morning.

<sup>1</sup> In regard to this sentence a Harley Street physician writes me as follows: "In speaking of the menopause you said that only if there is actual physical disease need there be physical illness at this time. This is not true. The disturbance of the endocrine glands at this period may result in severe symptoms in the absence of physical disease. It depends upon the endocrine and psychological constitution of the individual and, fortunately, is responsive to endocrine therapy." My correspondent is a well-known endocrinologist.

as the mind emerges from the unconscious state, is very common during the climacteric. To the woman who is physically healthy *and mentally adjusted* the menopause should be nothing more than a period of transition from one stage of a full and happy life to a later and therefore even fuller, happier and more mellow one.

A similar change occurs in the male, but at a much more advanced age. At this age, normally round about sixty, there is an enlargement of the prostate gland with a corresponding heightening of sexual desire with mental concomitants often very distressing to men at this period. Having mentioned the prostate gland we may add that some men may have been distressed by a thin oily liquid which exudes from the penis, especially after any sexual excitement, not merely at a time of sexual intercourse. This liquid comes from the prostate gland situated at the base of the bladder. It acts as a lubricant for the penis when inserted into the female vagina and also as a vehicle in which the sperm-cells can travel along the penis. Except during intercourse this secretion contains no sperm cells and the loss of small quantities of it should not cause the slightest worry or alarm. Impotence, that is inability to erect the penis and therefore inability to penetrate the vagina, may be senile, or may be due to physical, psychological, or nervous illness. Harvey quotes an instance of an old man of over ninety who was not only capable of the sexual act, but became the father of a child. The change in the male, however, when it occurs, is less apt to be accompanied by physical symptoms, probably because firstly it takes place later, when there is not so much vitality to redirect into other channels, and secondly, the average man has even wider interests than the average woman.

Impotence and sterility are causes of much domestic unhappiness and much unfaithfulness. Often they are both caused by structural defects which can easily be put right by a competent doctor. The over-use of alcohol and tobacco sometimes causes both impotence and sterility. Concussion, obesity, venereal disease, and excessive sexual indulgence have been classed amongst physical causes. Exhaustion due to overwork or pressure is less frequently a cause. A com-

mon cause in men is a fear that when marriage comes it may find them unable to do their part. Sometimes this becomes a veritable panic, and fear can so inhibit function that the thing feared comes to pass. Men have been known to "disappear" on the eve of marriage because this fear has grown to such tremendous proportions. A frank talk with a married friend would sometimes save the situation. In other cases, sometimes only after a long analysis, a psychologist could dispel the fear.

### *The Sex Act and its Sequel*

Half-knowledge and superstition are such powerful producers of fear, and fear in its turn is so fruitful a cause of psychic disharmony and "nerves," that knowledge in regard to anything nearly related to everyone's life should be welcomed by the open-minded. All ministers and doctors who do much psychological work know that a week scarcely passes but they will have to try to allay the fears of those who are ignorant about matters relating to the sex instinct. It is advantageous therefore that every adult should understand exactly what is meant by the sex act. Married people and people about to be married should know more than this. They should understand the essential preliminaries to a sex act which is both psychologically and physiologically complete. There is no point in discussing that matter at this stage. It is discussed in Appendix II. But much misery, especially for young women, would have been prevented had they known exactly what the act was by which alone children can be begotten.

The act is a beautiful one, an intimate one and a very sacred one. Those who love one another, and who have been delivered from the bondage of past taboos which supposed that everything sexual is unclean, often feel it to be the most beautiful and intimate means of manifesting their love for one another that God has made possible for two human beings. It is sacred also because both parents enter into that ineffable mystery through which they share the creative activity of God Himself. For their act may result in bringing a new little life into the world.

But it is our business in this Appendix merely to state the physical facts. In reading them we should avoid any tendency to make sex-fantasies, by thinking of the facts as we think of other scientific facts. The sex-act is briefly described on p. 29. During intercourse the woman normally is not quiescent. Her whole body is responsive. The more responsive the woman physically is, the more likely is conception to take place. The male fluid is drawn further into the womb. No woman should suppose it unwomanly to make this response. The ejection of the fluid for the male, marks the climax of the experience. The woman also should experience, through the stimulated clitoris and vagina, a climax of erotic excitement and delight. In the perfect act these climaxes or orgasms should be simultaneous. The woman's may occur a few seconds or even minutes later and the man should not withdraw till his wife reaches her climax. If he repeatedly withdraws too early he leaves his wife so unsatisfied physically and psychologically that a neurosis may be set up. After the orgasm, an experience of exquisite physical pleasure, there follows a sense of deep happiness and peace and a desire for sleep. The sperms pass upward into the womb (partly through the action of the cilia or hair-like projection from cells lining the genital passages which push the sperms toward the mouth of the womb, and partly by the sucking action of the womb), where they may meet the female egg-cells. If one of these ova be penetrated by the spermatozoa it is said to be fertilized. The united cell, or zygote, then embeds itself in the wall of the uterus and becomes an embryo which, nourished by the maternal blood stream and protected from injury by a membrane and the uterine waters, remains and grows for nine months, or two hundred and eighty days, from the first day of the last period. Half-way through the pregnancy, movement of the foetus can be detected. This is called quickening. Contraction of the womb coupled with relaxation of the passages ultimately result in the birth of the child. A long cord containing blood-vessels joins the baby at the navel to the placenta of the mother, the placenta being a mass of tissue within the womb and rich in blood-vessels, the function of

which is to provide nourishment for the child. It is attached by membranes to the uterus wall. The cord is cut by the doctor attending the mother at her confinement, and some twenty minutes after the baby is born, the placenta passes through the vagina and the process of birth is complete. During pregnancy menstruation ceases. Two or three days after childbirth the breasts fill with milk, and the mother is normally able to suckle her child. Menstruation is usually absent during this process also, but this is not invariable. Childbirth is possible at any time during sexual life, that is roughly from fourteen to fifty, but twenty-five to thirty-five is the most fertile age.

Leading authorities now agree that sex intercourse, while harmless, should not, for æsthetic reasons, take place during menstruation; it may, without harm to the woman, take place during the first four months of pregnancy if the latter is normal. The utmost gentleness, however, should be used as it is important that no pressure be exerted on the uterus. During the last month of pregnancy intercourse should not take place. Nor should it be resumed until a lapse of six weeks after the birth of the child. There is no reason why sexual intercourse should cease at the climacteric or change of life. Some women have greater enjoyment in it subsequent to the change than they ever had previously, partly, it may be supposed, because there is no fear of a child being born.

## APPENDIX II

### PHYSICAL FACTORS IN MARRIED HAPPINESS

"There is no more striking or illuminating contrast in the whole broad field of the strange incongruities of modern civilization than man's attitude with respect to science and technology on the one hand and sex behaviour on the other. In the design and manufacture of a Packard sedan we insist on the most exact scientific and technological precision, but when it comes to the determination of the behaviour fit and proper to the occupant of the said car we turn back to the folkways of a barbarous people supposedly codified by Moses."—HARRY ELMER BARNES.

"The purity of the prude is one of the most unpleasant of human characteristics."—KENNETH INGRAM.

"In love, woman is a harp who only yields her secrets of melody to the master who knows how to handle her."—BALZAC.

"The physical element must be seen in its true relation to the spiritual, so that where love is absent, sex-intimacy will appear at once as an intrusion of the grossest selfishness into a sphere to which unselfishness is the first condition of admission."—Copec Commission Reports, vol. iv.

THIS Appendix is written primarily for those who are married or who are about to be married.<sup>1</sup> I hope also, however, that it may prove to be of some value to ministers and doctors who, more than others, are asked to help and advise people in the difficult business of managing the intimate relationships of life.

Many will feel that it is not fitting to include such a chapter as this in a book for the general reader. But we cannot stop the surging flood of desire for knowledge with the mop of "taboo" or "not yet." Let me quote a passage from an essay by Mary Ware Dennett in *Sex and Civilization*.<sup>2</sup> "How then are young folks to acquire their knowledge? To the majority for a long time yet, it will come

<sup>1</sup> It is based on notes specially written for this book by, and after conferences with, medical friends. The subject is much more fully discussed from a medical standpoint in *The Sex Factor in Marriage*, by Dr. Helena Wright, formerly a missionary in China, and in the Appendix to *Successful Marriage*, by the Rev. Dr. Herbert Gray.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 106-7. Published by Geo. Allen & Unwin, 20s. net.



mostly by reading. Then, as fortunate circumstances permit, by learning from just the right older people—those who have not forgotten how it feels to be young, but who, in the living of their own lives, have gathered wisdom, sympathy and understanding as well as scientific facts. . . . The coming sex instruction will include something at least regarding the technique of sex union. This prediction will perhaps scandalize some of the present-day elders. They will say that such detail should be deferred till after marriage or certainly till adulthood, that it is wholly unsuitable and even dangerous for young people, that it would needlessly stimulate desire, and so forth.

"The answer is . . . that instinct needs to be supplemented by knowledge and artistry. This being the case, young people cannot help wondering endlessly about the actuality of sex union. Not helping them to understand does not in the least prevent their continuing to wonder. They want to know, and they need to know: partly because they have a right to understand something about mysteries of basic life experience, even before they meet it themselves; and partly because, if they do know, it tends on the whole to lessen rather than to increase the pressure of sex urge. . . . 'Consult your family doctor' is easy advice. It shifts responsibility and it sounds well, but it does not necessarily serve any good purpose. Physicians, as such, are hardly any more apt to be good guides in this matter than others . . . and, alas, many doctors have quite as shoddy a view of sex relations as have other people. Ordinary medical education is no particular antidote to the false, uncomfortable notions about sex which are early acquired and long held."<sup>1</sup>

At the opening of her well-named chapter called "The Sin of the Bridegroom," Miss Maude Royden in her book *Sex and Common Sense* has quoted some words from Susan Miles which, with her permission, I take the liberty of transcribing here:

<sup>1</sup> My experience supports this. I have had medical men and women coming for psychological treatment and have been amazed at the ignorance of, and maladjustment to, sex which they exhibited.



A deathless bubble from the fresh lips blown  
Of cherubim at play about God's throne  
Seemed her virginity. She dreamed alone  
Dreams round and sparkling as some sea-washed stone.  
Then an oaf saw and lusted at the sight.  
They smashed the thing upon, their wedding night.

I was married in India, seven thousand miles from home. On the morning of my marriage I had a letter from my mother; as wise, loving and kind a letter of Christian counsel and common sense as any man could desire. It contained this sentence: "Be kind to her the first night." I pass on to other bridegrooms that word from the lips of one who now has passed over to the Other Side.

A great, deep and true love of a man for the mate to whom he is wedded will naturally seek to express itself in physical intimacy. This is as it should be. Physical intercourse, in my opinion, does not need to be limited merely to occasions when a child is desired. "The false idea," says Dr. Helena Wright, "that intercourse undertaken for a reproductive purpose is more meritorious than intercourse performed purely as an expression of love, is dying. It never had any foundation in reason or science."<sup>1</sup>

Intercourse is as natural a manifestation of affection as a kiss and ten thousand times more intense and self-expressive. Within the marriage bond it brings a sense of exaltation and harmony to both man and wife unequalled by any other experience. And all these joys are the purpose of God for His children. At the same time it becomes selfish if it is exacted, either on one side or the other, for it is a sacrament. Before a sacrament can mean what it might mean, preparation is necessary. Even within the marriage bond, to force the physical union when the mate is not attuned to it is a species of rape. Moreover it has serious consequences which a man, for example, in his own interests should know. I have known case after case in which the forcing of physical union upon a girl not attuned to it, especially on the first night of marriage, and especially in the case of a girl sexually unawakened or sexually ignorant, can be such a psychological shock to her that all subsequent physical intimacy is

<sup>1</sup> *The Sex Factor in Marriage*, p. 29.

repugnant to such a degree that it is often refused or merely tolerated when, ideally, it should be as much enjoyed by the wife as by the husband. Married happiness has received a severe strain at the very beginning over a matter that was meant to be a deepening of the spiritual union of two persons who truly love. I think of one couple whom I married who have drifted apart since the very first night of marriage for this reason alone.

Let us try to look frankly and sincerely at this problem as married life presents it, beginning with the marriage. It needs to be remembered that a modern wedding is a tremendous strain on the bride. In many cases a fond mother, the night before or even on the very morning of the wedding, has tried to make belated amends for the cruelty of ignorance inflicted for years on her daughter, by telling her at the last moment "what marriage means." Women have told me that they started for the church actually in tears because of the tumult aroused in them by the last minute impartation of such upsetting information which they had no time to weave into their mental fabric. Whether this be so or not, the leaving of her home, the parade up the church with everyone gazing at her dress and herself, the ordeal and solemnity of the service, the childish confetti assault, the reception and speeches, the rush for the train, the first meal in the honeymoon hotel or lodging with her husband; all these things together are more than sufficient to exhaust the body, mind, soul and spirit of the strongest girl in the world.

A bridegroom, in the excitement of the day, is apt to overlook this. There has been in his own case a tremendous output of nervous energy. To watch a bridegroom sweat as he replies to the toast of the bride may be taken as sufficient evidence on this point. The word "perspire" is not nearly strong enough! But that same evening he finds himself in a proximity to his beloved such as he has probably never known before. He is sexually aroused and in that arousal there is nothing wrong and everything that is natural. Indeed he would be made of stone if he could remain unmoved so close to so beautiful and desirable a thing. Let him remember, however, that she is tired out, and—even if will

ing—cannot rise to a new demand as she will spontaneously rise to it later. Let him kiss her, embrace her, and let her sleep. Let him be "kind to her the first night," lest he frighten her, even revolt her, and spoil the relationship both then and afterwards.

Let us pass on now to days which follow marriage and try to realize that there is an art of loving which includes an art in the physical side of loving. Those who love will want to practise that art, not only to get the best out of marriage, but because of a loving solicitude for the beloved.

Surely the first thing in the art of expressing love in physical intimacy, should be aimed at producing in both husband and wife feelings of desire. The thought that such feelings are wrong or sinful or animal or unclean should resolutely be banished, once and for all, as relics of a perverted and mistaken puritanism, which regarded all things joyous and pleasing with suspicion and all things even remotely connected with sex as unclean. God gave us the power to have sex feelings. The pleasure they give is one of His highest gifts and in their right place they are as much to be accepted as such as are feelings of glowing health after eighteen holes of golf on a glorious day, or feelings of pleasurable anticipation at five minutes to one on Christmas Day!

For the man, the arousal of sex feeling requires little or no art. The nearness of the beloved, her embracings, the sight of her face and form, the now legitimate admiration of her body; these are sufficient to arouse in most men passionate desire and sex feeling.

For the woman, however, it is different. She often needs to be roused or attuned for the act of intercourse. When she is sexually aroused Bartholin's glands (see p. 175) discharge their lubricating fluid in preparation for the reception of the male organ. The flow of this secretion is an indication that she is ready for intercourse. If she is not aroused sexually, the penis, enlarged by erection and male excitement, may cause her pain through friction with an unlubricated and tender surface. In the case of a first intercourse, unless the hymen is already ruptured or has been

stretched by digital manipulation, there is almost inevitably a momentary pain as this thin membrane tears. There is also a slight discharge of blood. Neither the pain nor the discharge is serious, though some medical writers advise the prospective bride herself to stretch the hymen previously or have her husband stretch it so that the first intercourse has no painful concomitant. Indeed a very nervous wife may, with advantage, have her first orgasm induced purely by digital manipulation on the part of her husband.

The husband who would practise the art of love should realize that every act of physical intercourse should be preceded by physical love-play. There is a technique of such love-play which psychologically tunes the woman for the act. It is not suitable, in a book for the general reader, to discuss this fully. But this physical preparation for intercourse is most important. If properly carried out both husband and wife are eager for intercourse and both find it enjoyable and satisfying. Details may be found in an essay written by the Rev. G. L. Russell, M.B., Ch.B., called "Medical Aspects of Marriage," printed in the volume, *Education for Christian Marriage*, edited by A. S. Nash, published by the S.C.M. Press at 7s 6d. The important part of this essay is also quoted in the appendix to Dr. Herbert Gray's book, *Successful Marriage*, p. 142, published by Rich and Cowan at 5s. Such preparation as is there described ensures that husband and wife reach the orgasm or climax of pleasure *together*, a condition which is essential to a perfect experience. If the wife's climax is a little late her husband should wait. Two pernicious habits are common. One is for the husband to withdraw whether the woman has her climax or not, selfishly being content to get his own satisfaction, but leaving her "up in the air," dissatisfied, frustrated, and probably angry and "nervy." The other is for the husband to withdraw before ejecting the male fluid. Both practices are exceedingly bad for the nerves of the wife from a psychological point of view, and the latter practice may soon wreck the nerves of both. The orgasm or climax is marked in both by a sense of pleasure so exquisite and intense that no other physical experience

compares with it, and it leaves both man and wife with an indescribable sense of well-being and a desire for sleep. Such a sense of pleasure was planned by God for His children and should gratefully be accepted as one of His gifts. Any thought that the preliminary love-play—involving, as it does, stroking all the erogenous zones, breasts, thighs and vulva—or the act itself is “unclean” or “wicked” or “nasty” should be resolutely rejected. Any feeling of guilt in regard to either should be recognized as a “hang-over” from the taboo on sex practised for centuries, added perhaps to that unhappy heresy of the Victorians which suggested that God was on the whole rather displeased with anything we enjoyed doing and that His “will” was usually unpleasant.

It may seem to some that such an intimate relationship is too sacred to be described, and that to write about it is out of place and even indelicate. “Surely,” someone will say, “such a matter may be left to married people to discover and work out for themselves.” The answer is that so very many marriages are wrecked on this rock alone, and wrecked quite early because of utter ignorance of the facts set out above on one or both sides. Many never do make the necessary discovery. Countless husbands think that nothing more is required than the rough and speedy satisfaction of their own physical desire. Clumsily and unskilfully and without understanding they do this and then wonder why their wives acquire such a distaste for the experience, which ought, above all other experiences, to draw them close together. Countless wives, on the other hand, simply because of a mistaken attitude to sex, and often because their husbands have never taken the thought or trouble, *or have not known how to awaken them sexually*, merely tolerate the experience, and view it as a demand of their husbands to which, with varying degrees of reluctance, they give way, often secretly harbouring the thought that the husband’s desire manifests a tendency in him which has more in common with the beasts than with a refined humanity. Other wives again are denied an experience for which they long and to which they have a right. They resort frequently to mastur-

bation, and rightly in my opinion, since, after all, their own husbands excited them and then failed to satisfy them, leaving them with the alternative of an aroused but unsatisfied passion, or else a satisfaction which they feel impelled to carry through themselves knowing full well that it is a second best but better than frustration after legitimate arousal.

The fact that harmony and normality in physical sex relationships are so seldom attained by married people is the most fruitful cause of neurosis in men and women of mature years. It is a fact which drives men to other women, and women to other men who *do* understand. It is a fact which makes people the victims of unsatisfactory habits of self-abuse, or of making imaginative, fantastic mental pictures on which the mind broods and dwells, giving to the dreamer a compensatory experience to the one he or she ought to have and enjoy in true marriage. It is a fact which accounts for "nerviness" of both husband and wife leading to irritability of temper, cross words and unkind silences, and that awful existence in which two people, who once loved, now merely tolerate one another and escape from one another with sometimes an ill-concealed relief. It is a fact which makes splendid Christian husbands and wives decide that there is not nearly so much in marriage as they at first supposed and that they must go their separate ways, only living together for the sake of the family and conventional appearances.

For these reasons some of us, who spend a great deal of our time trying to help men and women straighten out their problems and who find this maladjustment at the heart of so much unhappiness, feel that the time has come to speak out plainly, to give the facts as we know them, that those who read before marriage may be saved a disharmony great enough to spoil two lives, and that those who are married and are prepared to take a little trouble may cease "getting on each other's nerves," be delivered from their frequent bitterness and cynicism, and, by using a physical key, may enter into a new spiritual world of mutual love and radiant



happiness which are surely part of the purpose of God for every married pair. So shall the twain become *one flesh*.<sup>1</sup>

Nor must it be thought that a harmonious physical relationship dulls the spiritual life. On the contrary it enormously strengthens and clarifies it. It is the sexually unsatisfied personality whose spiritual vision becomes myopic. Sex *can* become an unclean thing if it is morbidly brooded on or unnaturally repressed. It can get in the way of the soul's full health if it be constantly aroused but never adequately and naturally expressed. Just because God has made us in the way He has, the normal and perfect functioning of all our powers alone leads us to reach our maximum health of body, mind and spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 5.

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